■ News / A7
PDI mystery looking for detectives; keep an eye out for clues

■ World / A9
Freed Italian hostage accidentally shot by US forces

■ Lifestyle
Why Entrepreneur of the Year award goes to Socorro Ramos

■ News / A4
Ex-PBA star Distrito to stand trial for murder in Las Vegas

JOB
Join our world of possibilities

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Sunday, March 6, 2005 ● 56 pages / vol. 28 / no. 88

website: www.inq7.net

Boy Negro, Bicolana wife 'met' thru text messaging

By Jeoff Dumlao Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUMAYAN, Catanduanes—Cyril Dass, 19, could not believe that her husband, whom she knew as Kim Sol Santos, was a suspected member of a terror group allied to Osama bin Laden.

Dass said she did not know much about his

Wrist video watch gives Israel army deadly edge

SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW: rolling hills of greenery cradle the Tagaytay Midlands, a residential site with a golf course and clubhouse. Most of its raw lands are owned by Highlands Prime Inc., a publicly listed property firm owned by the SM group of companies. The Midlands is a typical model development which offers the most arduous facilities without, however, disturbing the natural order of bucolic refreshments.

Maxi take in Minimi deal

Drilon on oil hikes: Buy back Petron

By Jaime Ludovy Javellana
and Abigail L. Ho

MANILA: President Fidel Ramos' former top economic adviser Jesus Drilon yesterday renewed calls for government to renegotiate a supply make in Petron Corp., saying this would be the "quick solution" to the eventual imposition of oil.

Warning of the social costs of the unexplained rise in domestic oil prices, Drilon said that renegotiating government control of Petron would serve as "a check on the monopoly and cartel that is now prevailing in the oil industry."

Drilon made the call following the recent record rise in world oil prices, which prompted the energy department to issue a warning to consumers to prepare for a regime of more frequent hikes in petroleum pump prices.

True enough, pump prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene again rose by 50 centavos a liter on Friday and Saturday because of the skyrocketing prices of crude and refined petroleum products in the regional and world markets.

Prior to minute the price hikes

THE OLD HOP HANDS: With arms wide open, President Arroyo welcomes to the Palace on Saturday Jose Santana, president of the giant watch maker Timex. By July this year, Timex plans to open its $1.24-million (P69.36-million), 24-year-old plant at the Mactan Export Processing Zone. (Story on Page A2)

P6-B contract for 1,700 guns placed on hold

By Ric Zamora

LIGHT, extremely powerful and accurate, the 5.56-mm, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (Saw)—or Minimi—is a light machinegun preferred by the Armed Forces' fighting elite.

It is also allegedly one of the most overpriced firearms in the military arsenal today, an Inquirer source in the AFP claimed.

It is so expensive that "ordinary soldiers wouldn't dry 'tuy' if he learned about it," a colonel said, alluding to perception among line soldiers that huge military deals were commissions at their expense.

A contract for 1,700 Minimi machine guns worth P600.3 million is among several military procurements which have been put on hold pending a review by Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz.

The contract is for a second order of Minimis under the AFP Modernization Program.

The Minimis, used in several NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) countries, were the first weapons bought by the Armed Forces using money raised from the sale of portions

Journalists hits AFP plan to gag media on terror

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Luige A. del Puerto
in Manila

LUCENA CITY—The Armed Forces' proposal of stiff penalties for journalists and media organizations that interview suspected terrorists is an unacceptable "curtailment of press freedom," the Organized Union of Journalists of the Philippines said yesterday.

NUJP chair Jinky Sapitos Serrano called on all media groups to challenge the "preposterous" proposal aired on Friday by Lt. Gen. Efraim Adar, AFP deputy chief of staff, and said it opened an entire society to "the dangerous vicissitudes of having a few people dictate what the public should read or listen to.

"Adar engages in typical double-speak when he says the military discriminates between legitimate discovery and terrorists. His proposal is pure and simple censorship and an imposition of prior restraint on the press," Serrano said in a statement.

"THE THRILL of survival," Father Joseph Reuter, SJ, recalls what, ilustration as a POW at Los Baños was like. Also present are US envoy Francis Ricciardone and Sen. Richard Gordon.

Songs kept hope alive at Barracks 19

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—Even during the darkest hours of Camp Fort, Fr. James Reuter and a group of other young Jesuits never lost courage and hope.

The songs they composed during those hard days when they were interned at the Japanese concentration camp here showed it.

"What is the hope that the white flags bring?/What puts the zip in the songs we sing?/What's the reason for the crowd 'round the barracks door?/Past comes day we will be free!"

Reuter sang the song from which these lines were taken at the commemoration here of the

Sports proves the disabled can

By Ric Zamora

BAMBAN on the Island.

With patience, proper coaching and customized balls, they can now play ping-pong and volleyball, with a little modification, of course.

Youngsters from the Philippine School of the Blind (PSB) in Pasay City showed how to play the games during their annual competition—dubbed "Spectacular Spectator for the Deaf and Blind"—held Friday at the Camp Aguinaldo.

Instead of the ping-pong ball flying over the net, it was rolled under toward the other player.

The receiving player returned the ball also by rolling it until his opponent, making sure it also went under the net to the opponent.

The blind contenders, standing at the opposite ends of the table, "watched" the movements of the ball...lifted with yellow...by feel, tossing the floating round it inside.

GAMES that students from the Philippine School of the Blind play during its "Spectacular Spectator" at the County Aguinaldo on Friday include ping-pong with customized balls.

Dennis Lucena of the Bilibid Band, who now uses Braille Notepad of the Blue Team, was so focused on the sound the ball made that he demanded "absolute silence" from the audience.

"The footsteps are distracting," Lucena complained.

Another fellow from player, Jaculdi Valentin, who played against Celmar Dass of the Red Team, complained about the distraction caused by students who milled around the ping-pong table.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2005

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Senate, House tiff may affect VAT

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Philip C. Tubeza

THE PALACE-sponsored value-added tax measure could end up a casualty in the raucous bickering between the Senate and the House of Representatives over the former's hasty approval of the 2005 national budget.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said he expected a "very difficult" bicameral conference over the VAT measure because of bruised feelings.

"Unless this is settled, I'm afraid the Senate and the House will take very stiff positions in the future," Drilon said recently.

"I know are differences in version, and I respect those will be differences, but I expect these will be differences should not even affect their deliberations unless they're getting personal," Negrales said yesterday.

"The IMF is for government to get more revenues for our people. It has nothing to do with the push of the executive or the push of the congressmen," he added.

Maliwalay is heading on the passage of the VAT measure to raise the bulk of the targeted P60 billion additional revenues the government needs to get out of its fiscal rut.

Drilon reiterated his plan to seek out a solution with Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

"What is important is that we must be able to come up with a measure and I am convinced that unless the ruffled feelings are smoothed and the issue is put to rest, it can affect the bicameral conference committee debates," Drilon said.

The Senate last week passed the P907.96-billion budget for 2006 without removing the bicameral conference committee. The Senate action angered many congressmen who had hoped that their push hated would be endorsed to its original level in the House, the venue for reconciling conflicting versions of a measure.

Drilon said that congressmen should not get angry with the senators but should instead be happy that they had smoothly adopted two approved budgets.

The House approved budget provides for a 40-percent reduction in the pork barrel of legislators from P200 million to P120 million for each senator and from P70 million to P40 million for congressmen.

"It is very important that we should be able to set aside personal animosities and look at the legislative agenda without rancor and controversy," Drilon said as a forum at Subic Bay.

Drilon noted that there were "radical differences" between the House version of the VAT bill and the one shaping up in the Senate ways and means committee chaired by Sen. Ralph Recto.

The House version provides for an increase in VAT from 10 percent to 12 percent, while Recto's committee proposes a single rate of 10 percent but lifts exemptions on certain goods and services.

Drilon said he expected Recto's report to be approved by the Senate in a whole.

Recto is scheduled to sponsor his committee report on Monday to pave the way for floor debates and approval within the week.

After the Senate approves the measure, the two chambers would then convene a bicameral conference to reconcile their respective versions preparatory to its final approval and submission to the president.

But time is running out because Congress is scheduled to go on recess on March 18 for the Lenten break.

At this development, Negrales called on senators to stop making statements to media about the congressmen's purported plan to reenact the budget to restore their P6 billion pork barrel fund each.

He said that while leaders of both chambers had called for an end to the bickering, some senators, like Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, continued to lash out congressmen about their alleged excesses.

He also noted that Inquirer columnist Amita Almanzal had insinuated in her column yesterday that the House had a "plan A and a Plan B" so the congressmen could move their pork back to the budget.

"There is no such thing. We would not have approved the budget that early if there were such plans," Negrales added.

Country on way out of fiscal crisis, says GMA

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday declared that the Philippines was well on its way to fiscal crisis deliverance and she pointed for an investment renaissance.

The President's bullish stance stemmed from the approval of new tax measures, a robust stock market and a turnaround property and construction sector, and growing interest among foreign investors.

"We are well on the way to our destination. The fiscal problem is on the ways to resolution. I assure you the future is bright, just keep the faith," Ms. Arroyo said in a speech before receiving certificates of the National Movement of Young Legislators in Pasay City yesterday.

The President called Congress' approval of her 2005 budget, which included cutbacks in pork barrel allocations, and the near-approval of the value-added tax reforms "should be monuments to policy reforms."

The streamlined budget and new tax revenues are part of the President's strategy to have a balanced budget and an economic growth of at least 7 percent before her term ends in 2010.

The President has come a long way from her declaration of a fiscal crisis in August last year which jolted Congress into pushing for new revenues measures and the government bureaucracy to accept her cost-cutting measures.

"We are building a strong foundation for rapid investment led growth. There is a convergence in confidence," said the President, who cited glaze signals makes Times an unsung titans that have remained upbeat on the country's prospects.

The President met with Times president Jose Ivan Lim in Malacañang yesterday.

Its his talk with the Arroyo, Santana revealed his firm's plan to pour US $15 million in new investments into its 20-year-old plant at the Mactan Export Processing Zone to make shoes matches for export directly to its markets in the region without passing through its US distribution network.

"Life is ticking not only for Times but for the Philippines. Now, we will see Times matches and its allied brands (Coach, Arroyo, Nautica and Timberland) delivered directly from Cebu to your shelves all over the world," the President said.

Aside from fiscal reforms and renewed foreign investor interest in the country, the President also noted the bright prospects of the domestic economy. "The bull run in the stock market is building firm. We have a perceptive upswing in property and construction. SMEs (small and medium enterprises), housing and tourism will be clear in our sights as the economy surges forward," the President said. BEC, Gil Cabunagan Jr.

DENR to cut logging permits by 80% ahead of partial ban

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources intends to cut down by 80 percent the number of government-issued logging permits and licensed timber processing plants in preparation for the reduction of overall logging in the country.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said it was not necessary to entirely close too many timber processing plants and holders of integrated forest management agreements (IFMAs) as these only served to promote illegal logging.

"We are reducing it to a new set of responsible timber industry. We will not hesitate to punish the violators of forestry laws and regulations," Defensor said in a statement.

"This is a step toward weeding out errant holders of industrial forest management agreements and encouraging the good ones," he said.

The move is in line with the department's new policy direction to limit timber activities to only two or three regions and placing the rest of the country under a complete log ban.

The DENR has identified the Caraga and Davao regions as potential areas for so-called "production forests" as these regions have the capability to meet the three-million-cubic-meters domestic demand for wood.

Defensor asked nongovernment organizations to help the agency in rebid assistance in review of holders of logging permits and evaluation of the performance of industrial tree plantations.

"It would be best if the IFMAs that would be allowed to continue operating will likewise have the seal of approval of NGOs, especially those actively working in the host communities of these IFMAs," the secretary said.

Legal logging is allowed through the grant of various forms of logging permits: the timber license agreement (TLAs) issued during the Marcos dictatorship; the IFMA and the wood-based forest management agreement (WFMA) that began replacing the TLAs during the Aquino administration; and other special forms like the private land timber permit, the forest land grazing management agreement (FLGMA) and the community-based forest management agreement (CBFMA).

Defensor recently created a five-person committee to review all existing IFMAs and also look into the FLGMAs, CBFMAs and SIFMAs.

The DENR announced yesterday that the number of TLAs had been reduced from the 408 issued in 1987's towering 9.6 million hectares to only 13 TLAs.

Jhunelle S. Rivera

Lagman: Look who's talking from the gutter

By Philip C. Tubeza

ALBAY Rep. Edcel Lagman yesterday displayed tips Archbishop Ramon Arguelles' ignorance in his challenge to a debate on the proposed family planning bill, and suggested that the Catholic bishops' refusal to participate in debates on the issue showed the "paucity" of their arguments.

Arguelles on Friday rejected Lagman's challenge to a debate on the proposed Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2005 (or House Bill 5773), describing it as a "pointless face-off."

"Look who's talking from the gutter," said Lagman, who insisted that a national debate on the proposed family planning law in Congress would help enlighten the public about the bill which the Church and its allies have vigorously opposed.

Lagman said Arguelles' response was "regrettable" because "paucity of arguments cannot be supplemented by crude name-calling."

"Bishop Arguelles, please settle self-proclaimed superiority when he also said that he resisted debates with the 'brainless we are not equals.' He said.

"It takes two to debate and I would leave the good bishops in their own dungeon if they prefer to continue their self-serving soliloquy on the family planning bill," he added.

Lagman said he would only debate with the bishops and not with "one of their unrelented subalterns" since the bishops were the ones responsible for the crafting and dissemination of "derogatory and misleading" patent letter against HB 5773.

"The purpose of a debate is not for the protagonists to cry-to-convince one another but to enlighten the team, present the facts and argue the merits of their respective sides of the controversies before an an audience or the public," Lagman said.

Contrary to the bishops claim that a debate would be useless because arguments will be made from different perspectives, Lagman said that the debate "would not meander because the parameters and issues will be well-defined."

He said the debate would revolve around three issues: Whether HB 5773 legalizes abortion, whether it is arbitrary and unconstitutional, whether it invades the privacy of families and divests parental values, whether it is biased for modern family planning methods and whether or not mandatory "age-appropriate" reproductive health and sex education for the youth will encourage early "sexual initiation" and promiscuity.

P23-M Jolo rehabilitation to start

By Ed General and Jude S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

JOLO, Sulu—The government will start rehabilitating the areas affected by the recent fighting here as the military hunted for an unidentified gunman against Muslim rebels and bandits following the order of President Macapagal-Arroyo, officials said.

Secretary Teresita Deles, presidential peace adviser, said the President had instructed her to ameliorate the return of displaced residents to their homes and to reconstruct all damaged structures.

Local government officials have proposed a P23-million rehabilitation fund package.

Deles said local government units could distribute part to speed up the rehabilitation, particularly by using their internal revenue allotments (IRA).

"There will be a system of incentives for local government units that will be doing their part in the reconstruction," she said.

While the threat in Sulu is to repair the damage caused by the fighting, Malacañang said Mr Arroyo also wants the rebel forces and bandits finished off.

In a statement read by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, the President said she had "directed our forces to continue operations in Sulu and in Patikul to apprehending and neutralizing the remaining bandits and members of the Abu Sayyaf, as well as the other groups that were reported [to] have alliances with them."

Governor Sakur Tan, chair of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco), said the government would continue extending relief assistance to the evacuees, even to those that had returned to their homes.

"We will be happy to deliver relief goods once again to their places of origin and homes," he said.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roberto Dolorfino said that aside from hunting down the Abu Sayyaf and the Moro National Liberation Front faction led by Rahiro Basit, the military would also assist returning evacuees.

At least 10,000 individuals have refused to return to their homes for fear that violence would erupt anew following the town of Mt Arrayan under of an unrestricted manhunt against Malili's group and the Abu Sayyaf.

During the more than one week of fighting, at least 100 people died, 34 of them soldiers.

Deanna Ee Jun Jael David Wasik to Alvin Mesaret and Jael Che Awale:

"If friends Abdur Wasik Jaafar his group did nothing wrong, then he should come out and face the music; get a lawyer and do it through the bar of justice," Deanna said during a meeting of local leaders and members of the provincial disaster coordinating council here.

Deanna reminded them that Misuari, former leader of the MNLF, was "man enough" to face the rebellion charges filed against him in 2001.

He recalled he was the one tasked to bring Misuari back from Malaysia where the latter had sought refuge.

"(Misuari) returned and faced the charges against him," Deanna said.

Sources said Malik attended army outposts in Parangan on Feb. 5-6—evidence, he the Feb. 1 massacre of the family of a barangay councilor allegedly by soldiers.

As of March 4, a total of 9,282 families, or 53,851 persons, had fled their homes here for evacuation centers.

Local officials hoped that by next week, the number of evacuees would go down to 6,000 families or less.

Debt and the rehabilitation of the damaged infrastructure here could be expected to be completed by the end of the month.

While the morning was meant to discuss rehabilitation efforts in Sulu, it also (unclear) to open old wounds when some in the audience raised concerns over the fate of Misuari.

Misuari has been detained for the past three years in a Philippine National Police camp in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. With Christine O. Avendaño

In cooperation with intel

NOTEBOOK FESTIVAL

Come and be a part of the

"Notebook Festival"

to be held at "Cyberzone" SM Megamall, Bldg. B
on March 10-16, 2005

Schedule of Activities

March 11 (10am - 9pm) (3:00pm - 4:00pm)
- Talk/Seminar about Mobile Technology in the Philippines
- The Status of Mobile Business in the Philippines

March 12 (9am - 9pm)
- DIY (Do It Yourself) Contest

March 13 (9am - 9pm)
- Demonstration

FREE ENTRANCE
Get a chance to win a
Canon iP1000 printer
and
A300 DigiCam

LINKSYS
A Division of Cisco Systems, Inc.

XMOBILE NEO VIPER note HYUNDAI

US court orders murder trial for former PBA star

LAS VEGAS – Despite conflicting testimony from two witnesses and a claim of self-defense, a judge has ordered former Philippine basketball star Rudy Distrito to stand trial for murder in the fatal stabbing of another man in November 2004.

"There are more unanswered questions than answered on what created this whole situation," said Las Vegas Justice Court Judge Ann E. Zimmerman on Thursday before finding Distrito error for trial.

Authorities say Distrito, a defensive star during 20 years in the Philippine Basketball Association, stabbed Jose Amaya to death during a midlife second binds-out of the Las Vegas Strip.

Domestic lawyer Robert Langford, called Christian 24 charging with defense.

"The burden is on the state to prove that it was not self-defense and they have to prove that beyond a reasonable doubt," Langford said.

Distrito has been in jail here since surrendering to authorities in December. He was scheduled for arraignment March 21 in Clark County District Court.

Witness Richard Cooke testified Thursday that Distrito told him Amaya had a knife when the two men started wrestling on the ground.

But Cooke' friend, 17-year-old Sidney Moore, said Cooke told her that Distrito had told him Distrito had the knife.

Distrito's aggressive play for Alaska has Miguel named him the misnamer "The Destroyer." He was suspended in 1995, his third season, for a Baguio bar fight against an opponent.

Manny Pacos, of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations, compared Distrito to former NBA star Dennis Rodman, also known for his aggressive playing style. AP

GMA urged to honor hero-fireman

THE DEPARTMENT of Interior and Local Government has recommended to President Macapagal-Arroyo the conferment of presidential honors on a fireman who gave up his life to rescue his co-staff duty when.

PIO Antonio Villanueva runs off duty when fire struck a building on F Burgos Avenue in Caridad, Cavite City, on Feb. 21. Instead of heading home, he joined his fellow firemen in putting out the fire.

Villanueva was on the fire ladder trying to bring down the Pastors on the second floor of the building when a backdraft caused the glass windows to explode in front of him. As glass shards hit him, he lost his balance and fell head first on the concrete pavement.

"Each a citation will not only honor the records of the Bureau of Fire Protection personnel, but also encourage the bravery of PO2 Villanueva's wife and two minor children," said DILG Undersecretary for Peace and Order Marius Corpuz.

Villanueva was told to rest for week in the country Received the beginning of The Prevention Month.

Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes honored him at his funeral and posthumously conferred on him the Medalya ng Kagitingan.

"Undersecretary is willingness to offer his life to their others and live....deserves praise and recognition," Reyes said. Bureau director

Corrections

IN YESTERDAY'S story, "Robbers' wife accuses 10 cops of theft," on Page A23, it was mistaken that Teresita Robbers' wife Mr. Teresa had said that during the commotion in which the arrest of her husband, "she noticed that their bracelets, watches, diamond earrings and cellular phones worth more than P4,0,000, and cash Rolex watch worth half a million pesos, were gone." The value of the Rolex should have been included in the P4,0,000. . . .

IN YESTERDAY'S story, "10,000 attend Church rally," on Page A2, the date of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' Episcopal Commission on Family Life is on Monday Pacem di Australia, not this time Australia.

. . .

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors appearing in Inquirer, and letters to the editor, to newsinq@inquirer.com.ph. Those whose letters appear should include their full names, complete addresses and telephone numbers. Please send letters to the editor to opinion@inquirer.com.ph.

PHILIPPINE SOCIETY OF ENDOCRINOLOGY AND METABOLISM, INC.

2005 ANNUAL CONVENTION

"Clinical Guidelines in Endocrinology"

March 12, 2005 • Makati Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City

MESSAGES

OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATING COMPANIES

CORPORATE MEMBERS

OTHER PARTICIPATING PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES

SECRETARIAT

Southwoods claims PAL crown

Wins by two points over Canlubang

By Herong R. Castillo

BACOLOD—How sweet it is.

Southwoods won its second Philippine Airlines Interclub golf championship yesterday, achieving this once in impressive and unreasonable fashion over a truly championship field.

Teddy Antiz provided the opening and Richard Bibat shut the door when Canlubang tried to crash the unyielding Southwoods party with 1,000-foot putts that spelled the difference.

Antiz holed Canlubang's three-footer with a 7-iron from 106 yards in the left rough for an eagle 3 on the fourth hole, and Bibat sank a 3-wood from 230 yards on setup no less for birdie also on the last to Southwoods totaled 144 points to beat Canlubang by two.

The 35-year-old Antiz salvaged a hard par 73 at the Hilaguista course here while two-stroked to 36 points in a morning rule that underscored how Southwoods' youth development program bore fruit.

Former national champion Antonio Henderson also fired a 36 while Bibat finished with a 29 (level of the 28 of Mike Alejandro at the least posted a third-round 1,20 Lawrence Segrido stumbled with a 42, and did not count.

Abe Ecral, Ronnie Torrecampo and B. Tengco all scored 38s for the Negor Bureau with Dave Hennessy chipping in 32 to complete their 151 to 153.

Joy Bonoan, the high-point man for the Negor Bureau in Div. 2, shot himself in the foot with a one-counting 37.

"This is a quality win," said Southwoods captain Rudy Rosales, noting that the Canlubang Country-based club's initial success in 1999 came when both Canlubang and the then-active Laurel Valley contested the event.

Though he congratulated the Southwoods team while it was celebrating behind the 18th green, Canlubang non-playing captain Luigi Velo blended the championship of "turned" after the controversy that marred the third round in Bonbo.

The two-point difference will remain in issue following two decisions by tabulator John Spiers in the third round that proved crucial in the end. The first ruling allowed Hennes to 6 of fourth-seeds to avoid a two-stroke penalty for a lost ball and the second inflicted a two-stroke penalty on Canlubang ace Ariel Espanola.

After gaining a win with Southwoods in the final round, defending champion Del Monte sputtered with 8 combined total, managing just 319 behind Louie Dimabelis 21 and the 36 of Eyong Mike to settle for third, 14 points behind at 468.

Wack Wack finished a distant fourth, shooting

(TURN TO P. 2)

Que just a shot off in Thailand

PHUKET, Thailand—Angelo Que shot one of the day's best rounds of five-under-par 67 yesterday and moved into contention for his second main Tour title tomorrow by tying for third after 54 holes of the $500,000 Thailand Open.

Que, winner of the Vietnam Open last year, had five birdies in a 32-34 card that boosted his three-round total to 206, just a stroke behind co-leaders Thaworn Wiratchant of India and Scott Barr of Australia.

Kolden led the other 67 for the day as he took the lead at 207 in a tie with Jbes who struggled with a 74.

Tied with Que were Arjit Mikhi Singh of India (71) and Scott Strange of Australia (70).

Richard Lee of New Zealand was just one off the lead at 208 after a 69.

Carlos Cruz, the other Filipino in the field, was in a seven-way tie for 49th after scoring 73 for 218.

Meanwhile, Jenny Rosales, who won last week's SEA Open in Hawaii, opened up with a two-over par 74 in the first round of the Mother Coral Classic in Mexico. South Korean Hee Won Jung led with a 66.

Reyes, Bustamante breeze to quarters; Valle in semis

By Jane Plasares

SINGAPORE—Efren "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante neatly crushed their elimination round rivals to advance to the quarterfinals against Singapore's Ivan yesterday in the final leg of the Ian Magsol Series 9-ball first in Staples City here.

Gandy Valle, on the other hand, became the first Filipino to enter the semifinals at the expense of compatriot Lee Vann Corteza, 9-6.

Valle took the last three racks from a 6-3 count as the billiards ace from Davao City set up a semifinal meeting with the winner between Bustamante and Chinese Taipei's Jiang Ching-shun.

"It put a lot of pressure on me playing against a fellow Filipino but I kept [the] go wins," said Valle, who finished off Corteza with a six-rack shut outing the second half to sink the deuce-rack in the 14th rack.

Corteza, whose luck in the earlier rounds deserted him, got booted out of the $50,000 loot and settled for the $1,750 consolation purse.

Hardly breaking a sweat, Reyes outed Vu Trong Kiet of Vietnam, 9-5, in the second round to set up a duel against countryman Antonio Gabica, who cruised to a 9-2 triumph over Japan's Kunihiko Takahashi.

Gabica, a by-word in Cebu's billiards circuit, hopes to duplicate his recent conquest of Reyes to advance in the countrydirect organized and aired by ESPN-Star Sports.

The unbeaten Gabica earned the first of two spot wins "The Magician" and forced the knockout loss out of the Reyes 71-Gallon All Filipino-Billiards Open two weeks ago.

"I hope to recover my rhythm, otherwise, he could beat me again," said the 40-year-old Reyes, claiming that his timing was off despite a double-free passage into the quarterfinals.

Bustamante, who subdued Lin Ch Li of China, 9-4, before posting to outmatch 9-2 win over Vietnam's Nguyen Thanh Xuan, arranged a showdown against Yang, champion of the Hong Kong leg last year.

The Reyes-Gabica encounter and the match pitting Bustamante and Yang will highlight the schedule to the next phase.

It will be the first time since the tour's inception two years back that all the 128 spins survive, led by Reyes and Bustamante, made it to the quarterfinals of this event offering a top prize of $US,000.

In the other second round match, Chinese-Taipei's Wu Chin-shing bowled out compatriot Chao Hong-yang, 9-6.

PBA 'FIESTA'

Kings open campaign vs Barakos

GAMES TODAY (Araneta Coliseum)
4:15 p.m.—Red Bull vs Welcoat
6:30 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Air 21
(Alaska wins Quarter title)
(Rookie Contender)
1:45 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Red

EXCEPT for San Miguel's Chris Ibarguen, no other foreign reinforcement made an impression at the opening of the PBA Fiesta Conference last Friday.

But 6-foot-9 Eddie Elisma is expected to haunt Barangay Ginebra's rank as the Kings kick off their campaign for a third straight title against Red Bull at 6:30 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum.

Also slated today is the Welcoat game between Talk 'N Text and Shell at 7:40 p.m. (Manila time) in Indonesia, the first official league match played overseas.

Elisma, a former Portsmouth import, also played for league in China, Italy, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Lebanon.

Portsmouth, meanwhile, will provide 6-foot-9 Antonio Smith, a Michigan State product reported to be known for his strikes work ethics, when it faces a bruised up Barako squad earlier at 4:15 p.m. in the big dome.

Petilla is fielding the heavy "Pig" Miller, an NBA second round draft pick of the Golden State Warriors in 1994. The 6-foot-9 ager also once suited up for the Los Angeles Lakers.

The Phone Pals hope that the 6-foot-8 American Earl Ike will fill the void left by big man Jon Yeaden, who was suspended due to a relationship controversy.

Red Bull, meanwhile, is hoping to turn things around with 6-foot-9 Dalvin Johnson.

Shell will field in Wesley Gonzales, the rookie import at 6-foot-10.

Gloria Ozaeta, now handled by Jo ie Altamirano, and Sun Miguel Beer won the opening matchups Sunday. The Coke Tigers blasted the Sta. Lucia Realtors, 76-66, while the Brewmen thrashed the Alaska Aces, 82-73. Journalist Pilipino

SPORTSWATCH

Torres grabs Tanauan tourney lead

TANAUAN CITY, Batangas— Top seed Dominador Eugenio Torres grabbed solo leadership after shooting 5-under 67 to post a 36-hole total of 134 this morning in the fifth round of the Tanauan Classic Open-Mayor's Cup at the Epsaden Lake Laurel Memorial Gymnasium here. Torres took the second spot ahead of Wilfredo Nadera, Gil Cleto Santos, Gil Fernando Enriquez, Mel Mendoza and Rodolfo Mendoza, who all finished at 137. Enriquez, Nadera and Mendoza tied at 68 while Santos and Torres posted 69 apiece. (Melvin Bernardino, Contributor

JVC Open registration slated

QUEZON CITY—Submission of entries to the JVC Badminton Open Juniors Championship is on Mar. 31. The tournament, open to players 14 years old and below, is slated April 2 to May 29. Entry forms are available at Power Smash, Rosario and Badminton Center, east of the road connecting Shaw Blvd. and Old Wack Wack. For more information, call Pompoy Jr. 5883 Bacolod and Gil Magsaysay. E-mail jvcbadmintonph@hotmail.com or call 8863986, 7451586. The 14-and-under class is open to players born on or after Apr. 1, 1991, while those born on or after Jan. 1, 1990, are eligible to compete in the 16-and-under category.

Team MBA '73 bags AIM Cup

TAGAYTAY—To suggest the season this is the 2nd AIM Leadership Cup in the Tagaytay Highlands Golf Club on Mar. 5. The team was composed of Teddy Manalo, Ramon Ang, Ricky Vicente, Manny Villamor, Bobby Limcaoco, Philip Ledesma, Oscar Hilao, Mac Talamayan, Dodjie Diego and Ramon de Vera. Senior members and heads of the country's top corporations participated in the two-round field during the AIM Homecoming Week 2005.

Korean boxing champ arrives today

MANILA—South Korean welterweight champion Hana Kim and former Far Asian Boxing Association (Pabaa) light flyweight titlist Yuca Diesa will arrive today to face Filipino fighters Rey Pelonia and Salvador Barajas in the main bouts of the Pabaa Fight Night at the Philippine Navy Gymnasium in Fort Bonifacio. It will be the first non-title bouts of the two Filipino ring aces after defending their World Boxing Association (WBA) international crowns in Manhattan and Bayonnitor of last year. The titled runners-up bouts in the main card between the undefeated Filipino welterweight challenger Juanito Rubillar and former IBF champion Eugene Bermudez. The match is sponsored by Fortune Metals, Gold Pure, Family Plumbing Welded and Jannah TV boss Allen Rivera.

PJ..3M staked at 6-cock derby

MANILA—Over 100 cockers and cockfight fans thronged to the Cockers Coliseum in Quezon City on Mar. 3, to witness the Derby sa Kinse—the 6-Cock Derby sa Mar. 3, and 11 of the 20 cock-blooded Pinoy Derby Cup Cockfight. All stakes in a guaranteed purse of P1.3 million, while entry fee is P10,000. Determination of weights is set at 2 p.m. for 8 p.m. Derby sa Kinse is sponsored by Jose Marie Chan Foundation, Inc. and Tanduay Distillers, Inc. Cockfight Derby on April 15, 16 and 17 at the air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum. "The guaranteed purse is at stakes is P1.3 million, with an entry fee of P10,000. "This marks as a basic ranking campaign for our national athletes who will compete in the 2005 SEA Games," said Pano "Boy" Cruz, president of Luzon Gamefowl Breeders Association. Call 7113986.

S'woods claims . . .

Corporate Cup draws full roster

MALMANAW teams and foreign visitors from the United States and Korea will join local participants in the 19th Philippine Corporate Cup golf championship presented by Hyundai Gold which is set on March 6-13 at the Camp John Hay Golf Course Baguio City.

All 30 available tees slots were filled up long before the registration deadline last week, indicating a renewed interest in one of the longest running corporate events in local golf tours by players trading stands the country.

The field of at least 200 golfers (four players to a team) will try to help their respective squads win the top awards in the following divisions:

Group I for those with handicaps ranging from +5.0 to 9.9; Group II for 10 to 13.04; Group III for 14-18.99, and Group IV for 19 and above.

There will be a separate competition for seniors aged 55 years and above for the tourney also sponsored by Camp John Hay Golf Club, Camp John Hay Hotel, Camp John Hay Security Operations Ctr. and Wilson.

This year's Corporate Cup will feature a battle of management from its organizer, Golf Ventures, and the Philippine Corporate Cup Foundation Inc. to Club Leisure Corp. which will celebrate its 10th anniversary as a golf promoter of participation and popularity.

Camp John Hay chairman of the board Robert John Sobrepeña and Club Leisure Corp. chairman Ireland to the primary goal of the Corporate Cupto foster relations among golfers in the business community and activate Undersecretary Ramon Jacinto as one of the major events in the club calendar.

Rep. Maximo Rodriguez will be hosting the City of Baguio team, Sobrepeña honorees the Camp John Hay hot while Undersecretary Jacinto will lead the Malmanaw squad.

The participating teams are: Abra Mill, Alaska Milk, Alaska Inc., Amkor, Asian Terminals Inc., Avon Cosmetics Inc., Bank of Commerce, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Bank of Southeast Asia, Bayantel, Bayer, Bonifacio Land, Camp John Hay Golf Club, Camp John Hay Hotel, Camp John Hay Security Operations Ctr., Capitol Steel Corporation, Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc., Coca-Cola Export Corp., Cocolife, Colgate-Palmolive Philippines Inc., Commercial Bank of Cathay, Concepcion Industrial Corp., Cosmos Bottling Corp., Del Monte Philippines Inc., Delta Motors Corp., Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Finance, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Health, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Justice, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of National Defense, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Tourism, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Transportation and Communications, Dole Philippines Inc., Eastern Telecommunications Philippines Inc., Energy Development Corp., Equitable PCI Bank, Far East Bank and Trust Co., Fedex Express Philippines Inc., Filinvest Development Corp., First Philippine Holdings Corp., Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., Fuji Xerox Philippines Inc., Gaisano Capital, Golden Ribbon Insurance Co., Golf Ventures Inc., Goodyear Philippines Inc., Grandspan Development Corp., Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Ltd., Hanjin Shipping Co. Ltd., Hanjin Subic Shipyard Co. Ltd., Hanjin Subic Terminal Co. Ltd., Hanjin Transportation Co. Ltd., Hanjin Philippines Inc., Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Philippines Inc., Hanjin Shipping Philippines Inc., Hanjin Subic Power Corp., Hanjin Subic Terminal Philippines Inc., Hanjin Transportation Philippines Inc

HUNDEB Mystery: Who's guilty, who's not? The six suspects are caught in various poses.

PDI mystery looking for sleuths

By Racquel Gomez

INQUIRER readers, you are needed in the crime scene. There's been a murder and there are six suspects.

Enter the grimy world of the drama series "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" aired on the AXN Channel.

We won't need any arsenal of forensic equipment. All you need is wit, logic, a cell phone and a copy of the Inquirer and you'll get a chance to play Gil in "INQuest: The Philippine Daily Inquirer Adventure," the first 2001-based multimedia mystery game in the country.

For eight weeks, starting today (See ad on Entertainment Page A2-3), follow the INQuest Adventure in this paper and guess the answer to the questions found at the end of the chapter installments.

Piece together the shocking truth behind the murder of 28-year-old fictional character Jovan Mendez by collecting clues found in the various sections of the Inquirer, www.inquirer.com, and INQTV which is shown Thursdays, 10:30 p.m. on ABC2.

To answer, text in this format: INQ [space] [question no.] [space] [answer] and text to 2e16. Example: INQ 1 J. A.

You can send a maximum of three answers per question to 2222 for Globe/Touch Mobile/Sun Cellular subscribers or 889 Smart/Addict/Talk 'N' Text subscribers. But first, you have to register by texting: INQ Reg [full name] [complete address] [age] [gender] to 2222 or 889. Example: INQ Reg Juan dela Cruz C.2.6 Quezon Ave Pasig 24 M.

Prizes worth P800,000 will be given away via text.

At the launch of the INQuest Adventure Mystery at Shrubb Bar in Greenbelt Makati on Feb. 24, six fictional murder suspects were introduced to the public: Luis Limlingan, 21, from Mateo de Manila University as the good-looking party animal and son-in-law "Iberian." Orion Gallardo, 31, who works at Amerigo Industrial Company as sound crowd organizer "Gladiator." Anna Margarita Abaya, 30, employee of Equitable PCI Bank, is the socialite "Cynthia." Christian Arellanes, 24-year-old radio announcer is student bartender "Gian." And Larry Gallardo, 45-year-old businessman, is the renowned and righteous father "Hijos." And Harvey Wong, 38, is the overly sensitive "Ang."

Who among them killed Jovan Mendez?

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, March 4, 2001
4th Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: 1st Samuel 16:1,6-7, 10-13

David's anointing

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you be grieving over Saul whom I have rejected as king of Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way to Jesse the Bethlehemite for I have chosen my king from among his sons."

As they came, Samuel looked at Eliab (the eldest) and thought, "This must be Yahweh's anointed." But Yahweh said Samuel, "Do not judge by his looks or his stature for those rejected him. Yahweh does not judge as man judges. Someone sees only the eyes, Yahweh sees the heart."

Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel who said, "Yahweh has chosen none of these. But are all your sons here?" Jesse replied, "There is still the youngest, tending the flock just now." Samuel told him, "Send for him and bring him here for we will not sit down to eat until he comes." So Jesse sent for him (a ruddy boy with beautiful eyes and handsome he was a handsome lad with lovely complexion and beautiful eyes. And Yahweh spoke, "Go, anoint him for he is the one." Samuel then took the horn of oil and anointed him in the forefront presence. From that day onwards, Yahweh's Spirit took hold of David.

2nd Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

Christ will shine on you

Brothers and sisters, your were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Behave as children of light, for the fruits of light are shown forth in all goodness and righteousness and truth.

Try to discover from it what pleases the Lord, and take no part in works of darkness that are of no benefit; expose them instead. Indeed it is shame even to speak of what those people do in secret, but in exposure it is revealed for the light, everything becomes clear. And what has become clear becomes light. Therefore it is said: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead that the light of Christ may shine on you."

Gospel: John 9:1-41 or 9:1,6-9, 13-17, 34-38

Cure of a blind man

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He made some earth with his spittle and clay and rubbed it on the eyes of the blind man. Then he said, "Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam." (This name means sent.) So he went and washed and came back able to see.

His neighbors and all the people who used to see him begging, wondered. Why said, "Isn't this the beggar who used to sit here?" Some said, "It's the one." Others said, "No, but he looks like him." But the man himself said, "I am the one."

They asked him, "How then were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made some clay and rubbed it on my eyes and told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed and received my sight." And he said to them, "Where is he?" He answered, "I do not know."

They brought to the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made some clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees asked him again, "How did you receive your sight?" And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he works on the sabbath." Nevertheless others said, "How can a sinful person work miracles like these?" Thus, were divided and they questioned the blind man again, "What do you think of the man who opened your eyes?" He answered, "He is a prophet."

They questioned him, "You were born a sinner and now you teach us?" And they expelled him.

The blind man then had expelled him, the blind man heard. He went to him to the Son of Man?" He answered, "Who is he, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said, "You have indeed seen him, he is speaking to you." He said, "Lord, I believe" and he worshiped him.

Commentary

Yahweh said with the heart. And Yahweh's spirit takes out a person (like David) from the common life to anointed. The blind man is anointed with mud and told to wash in the pool, in obedience to Jesus, and the eyes began to take form and vision with astonishment and amazement he gives worship and adore himself. Jesus said God's authority gives God alone control to do this. He brought about God's control to the world. Jesus is the Light of the world, all need Jesus for the blind man because he found and he Jesus Lord, you are your heart. In your spirit deeper in a real truth to stand up for you and when you speak in the truth, the authority of the Spirit of God is with you. Jesus you in the blind man, enabled man from the dead and the light, the judge of the world.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

[illegible]

WHEREFORE, the petition is granted. Accordingly, the assailed Resolutions of the Commission on Elections dated [illegible] are hereby set aside. The Commission on Elections is ordered to proceed with the hearing and reception of evidence on the petition for the recall of petitioner Governor Lino Dizon. No costs.

SO ORDERED.

Bellosillo, Vitug, Kapunan, Mendoza, and Quisumbing, JJ., concur.

Petition granted.

Notes.—The power of the Commission on Elections to promulgate rules and regulations implementing the provisions of the Constitution or pertinent laws shall not be construed to include the power to amend or repeal the procedure, terms, and conditions for the exercise of the right to recall provided for in the Local Government Code of 1991. (Garcia vs. Commission on Elections, 277 SCRA 269 [1997])

The Commission on Elections has the power to enforce and administer all laws and regulations relative to the conduct of an election, plebiscite, initiative, referendum and recall. (Sec. 2[1], Art. IX-C, Constitution)

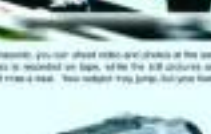
—D.G.R. Diaz

True idea

It's an assurance of only the very best.

Non-stop! Catch every bit of the action with Simultaneous Motion and Still Recording.

With Panasonic, you can shoot video and photos at the same time. No need to stop to start recording movies. The video is recorded on tape, while the still pictures are stored in the camera's SD memory. This way, you don't miss a beat. Your subject may jump, but your footage will not.



PV-GS55
1.3 sec. Quick Start
Ultra compact
MPEG4 Intermet Movie

Panasonic
ideas for life

FREE Tripod & Bag when you buy a Panasonic Digital Video Camera!

Drilon on oil hikes: Gov't must buy back Petron

From page A-1

some new oil players. Several Petroleum, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum and Total Philippines.

Caltex Pilipinas and Filipinas Shell said the big Thailand or other importers Caltex Phil. and Total Phil. have yet to announce their expected price adjustments.

Drilon, who spoke at a Iloilo Hotel forum, argued that with the government having largely outlived of the country's largest oil firm, it would be in a better position to temper escalating oil prices.

Gov't as player in oil industry

"The government must be a player in the oil industry by acquiring ownership of the market through Petron and thus when oil oil prices rise, the market will give consumers a choice whether they prefer Petron or the other two big players and other small players in the market," he said.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez pointed out, however, that no amount of government control of Petron would stop the rise in domestic pump prices as these are the product of international price surges.

"The present 40-percent government ownership of Petron is an appropriate level of ownership. Any change in government ownership in Petron will not change the movement of world oil prices," said Perez.

He noted how oil companies that were wholly government-owned in other countries, such as Petronas in Malaysia and Pertamina in Indonesia, had been unable to control world oil prices.

Just last week, both companies decided that they too, needed to raise their prices," Perez said.

Perez said that it was worth noting that almost every time there were hikes in local pump price hikes, Petron was ahead of steps the last to implement such price adjustments.

Full divestment

In August 2004, when the idea of "re-nationalizing" Petron was first floated about, the Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association (Ippca), the umbrella organization of new oil players, suggested that the government would do better to do the reverse, that is, fully divest its stake in Petron and have the firm fully privatized.

Ippca chair Fernando Almonte said then that the government, with its stake in the country's biggest firm, could not be a player as it supposedly market-driven oil industry.

He pointed out that even developed economies like the United States did not own oil firms.

Palace appeal

An unnamed source warned that the oil companies could use shuttle diplomacy to justify indiscriminate domestic price adjustments. Palace adviser appealed to the good sense of the oil companies that are "virtually all owned by less to say the prices of petroleum products in the country.

"The government appeals to oil firms to adjust only when absolutely necessary," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement released yesterday.

The Palace also ordered the Department of Energy to closely monitor petroleum pump prices.

President Macapagal-Arroyo last week banned a committee to review the Oil Deregulation Law which many have blamed for the government's inability to check the rise in domestic oil prices.

But Drilon said the review could take a long time.

The Senate President said that such control of Petron, one of the three big players in the domestic oil industry, the government can "productive the incentive" and give consumers the alternative of lower pump prices against those set by the two other oil giants, Shell and Caltex.

"We are not saying there should be no profit but we can not totally leave to market forces the pricing of oil because it is a vital implication," said Drilon.

He stressed that he was not in favor of a return to the regulated oil price regime as that would mean government would be providing subsidies.

"I am not for anybody having to say that let us have a reasonable adjustment in the prices and make sure this is not being abused and let's give the consumers a chance. If Petron will price it and [still] make money out of it, that should put some regulation in the market," he said.

The senator, who said it had been a mistake to sell the then state-owned Petron during the Ramos administration, proposed that government use the state-run pension funds to acquire 51 percent of Petron to obtain a 51-percent majority.

The government, through the Philippine $46-bil Oil Co., still owns 40 percent of Petron. The Saudi-based Aramco holds 40 percent and the remaining 20 percent is owned by about 2,000 individual and institutional investors.

All that non-landed was an administrative order from the President for the reorganization of Petron to proceed, the senator said.

GSIS, SSS

He said Petron would not be a bad investment at all for the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System, as it is a blue-chip company.

The move would have an immediate social impact as the government would have full control over the pricing of oil products, he said.

"The sense of the Oil Deregulation Law is that it was patterned on a free market and open competition among the oil players. However, what there is no such thing," said Drilon.

Cartel

He mentioned that the senators met Petron, the Netherlands-based Royal Dutch Shell and Thailand Caltex are a cartel that have a monopoly of the domestic oil industry.

"They can deny this until they turn blue but no, they cannot deny that there is no such thing as cartel," Drilon said.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. called on the government to identify the companies that operated under the DOE, hailed its system the Oil Deregulation Law by including a representative from the consumers sector.

"You have regulators, organized transport groups, oil dealers, you even have academicians in the panel but you do not have consumers. The people who pay the highest prices out of their own pockets," Pimentel said.

Soaring prices

As of March 3, the average price of dated Brent, the benchmark Dubai crude surged to a high $41.26 a barrel, up by almost $4 from the 30-day average of $37.07 a barrel.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products also soared to a March average of $57.06 a barrel, more than $5 higher than the $51.27 a barrel average posted last month.

MOPS-based diesel oil prices rose to a March average of $49.43 a barrel, jumping by almost $3.6 from last month's average of $45.85 a barrel.

Warning

Energy Undersecretary Jose Antonio Almoy Almoy the other day warned the public and even the domestic oil firms to brace themselves for a further surge as oil oil prices. With a report from AFC Gilbuenagan A-

PHILIPPINE
NTF2005
National Trade Fair
The Pride of the Regions
9 - 13 March 2005
MEGAMALL
Megamall Megarade Hall

Visit the Philippines' one-stop platform for SMEs and feast your senses on the country's best SME products from furniture and home décor to unique fashion accessories and sumptuous native delicacies.

National Trade Fair brings together over 200 companies from the 17 regions of the country. The show also offers a full range of business contacts for buyers and exporters and market info about SMEs -- the pride of all regions.

Organized by: dti
Supported by:
VISIT THE OTOP SPECIAL SETTING at the National Trade Fair

Journalists . . .

From page A-1

She said granting the AFP the power to determine what the media could cover would soon lead to the banning of journalists from conflict areas, thus depriving Filipinos in-depth and multi-sided coverage of tensions in conflict-ridden areas.

She added: "It is not for the AFP or any other government agency to curtail a constitutionally-upheld right as the Supreme Court has ruled."

Code of ethics enough

The NUJP believes that the current media codes of ethics, properly disseminated to reporters and editors, and their strict enforcement, suffice to ensure both the safety of troops in the field and respect for basic constitutional rights.

But the Philippine National Police would be just as pleased if media groups would refrain from airing or giving space to statements of "known terrorists."

Sr. Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson, said the PNP was in support of Arbon's proposal. But giving free rein to media makes her considered a no-no.

Brig. Gen. Jose Jr. Calimag, commanding general of the 9th Infantry Division based in Camp Lukban, Catbalogan, Samar, said he liked the idea.

The controversial Pilipinas, whose human rights advocates have accused of rights violations and abuses, said members of their unit, including members of the counterpart Scout Ranger Regiment, "have right to be interviewed by the media.

Accomplice

In an interview with the bayan, Arbon said "terrorist spokesmen" were "hiding behind" press freedom.

He said it was a mistake why media persons "allow these persons to say what they want to say."

"We don't want to subsidize enemies any more allow it," he said, adding in English:

"What we are saying is that it won't do anymore any good. Even the ordinary man on the street, instead is poisoned by these terrorist spokesmen."

Asked if he thought it was a time for a reporter or media organization to allow a known terrorist to air his side, Arbon said, "To advocate violence [and] in fact, it is a crime to incite the people to violence and hate."

"What we are saying here is that the media become an accomplice. What will determine that is the court.

"The person is already saying 'let us use violence,' and then he'll come on given a microphone to tell this to the whole country? It's not common sense to consult, to the media or an accomplice."

Propaganda

Bataoil said media groups should "examine the welfare of the people and the government" in pursuing stories.

He advised against airing what he called "the pronouncements and propaganda of terror groups."

Bataoil was vague about which groups and personalities should be considered terrorists, but said the PNP had persons and groups listed in order of battle.

According to Bataoil, these terror groups have ties with the CPP-NPA, and even the domestic oil firms, and some organizations, that urges it would objection. With a report from AFC Gilbuenagan A-

The WORLD

Edna Lorenzo B. Garcia

Freed Italian hostage shot by US forces

ROME—Italy on Saturday prepared to welcome back freed Italian hostage Giuliana Sgrena but the joy at her release was marred by the death of a secret agent killed when US troops opened fire on the convoy taking her to safety.

Sgrena, accompanied by several Italian secret service agents as well as her companion, Pier Scolari, who came to fetch her in Baghdad on Friday night, were expected to arrive at Rome's Ciampino airport at 08.30 a.m.

The 56-year-old journalist, who was held hostage for a month, was hit in the shoulder when US troops at a checkpoint opened fire on the car carrying her to Baghdad airport.

Italian secret service agent, Nicola Calipari, 52, was killed when he threw himself in front of her to protect her from the bullets. A second agent traveling with the two was still in serious condition Saturday.

The US military confirmed the incident, but said the Italian convoy, speeding toward a checkpoint manned by US forces near Baghdad airport, ignored signals to slow down and stop.

The United States has promised a rapid enquiry into what happened.

Sgrena was treated in a US military hospital and will need another operation to take pieces of shrapnel from her body, Italian media reported.

US President George W. Bush called Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi from the US president's jet to "express his regret about the incident that occurred earlier today," White House spokesperson Scott McClellan said in Washington.

"The president assured Prime Minister Berlusconi that the incident will be fully investigated," McClellan said, adding that the two spoke for about five minutes.

Sgrena "was freed upon by coalition forces...Apparently there was the loss of one life, an Italian citizen, and she was also injured in the incident," McClellan said.

"We regret the loss of life, the Italian citizen who lost his life, and obviously she is in our thoughts and prayers as well."

Berlusconi, a staunch ally of Bush, told a press conference in Rome late Friday there were "disquieting questions" that needed to be answered about the incident.

"Several shots hit the car. One man was mortally wounded by a bullet. He are paralyzed and dumbfounded by this brutality."

Berlusconi said an agent had thrown his body in front of Sgrena to protect her from the shots but was fatally wounded.

"It is a pity. This was a joyful moment which made all our fellow citizens happy, which has been transformed into profound pain by the death of a person who behaved so bravely." AFP

SGRENA pleading for life in Feb. 14 video. AP

THIS time for love.—Prince Charles sending a rose given to him in Canberra March 3. REUTERS

9 objections filed vs Charles' plan to remarry

LONDON—Nine formal objections have been filed against Prince Charles' plans to marry his longtime companion Camilla Parker Bowles, the British broadcasting Corp. reported Friday.

The deadline for legal objections to the wedding, scheduled for April 8, was 5 p.m. The objections were filed at local registry offices in Chippenham and Devizes, where the couple have homes.

The BBC did not specify what points the objections raised or who filed them, legal debate over the wedding has centered on the question of whether members of the royal family are permitted under British law to marry in civil ceremonies, as Charles and Parker Bowles plan to do.

The Church of England frowns on remarriages by people who are divorced, as both Charles and Parker Bowles are. They plan a civil wedding at the town hall in Windsor, followed by a religious blessing of their union.

The office of Britain's registrar general will evaluate the objections, known as caveats, to decide whether they are valid, likely by next week, the BBC said. Objectors can appeal to a judge if the registrar general dismisses their complaints.

Officials cannot issue Charles and Parker Bowles a marriage certificate until all the objections have been dealt with, the BBC said.

The wedding has hit several other snags since it was announced.

Charles and Parker Bowles—whom some describe because she was involved with the prince while he was married to Princess Diana—had to switch venues at Windsor Castle. AP

Asean uneasy over pace of Burma reforms

SINGAPORE—Asean is worried about the pace of democratic reforms in Burma (also known as Myanmar) and its impact on ties with dialogue partners ahead of Bangkok's takeover as chair of the group next year, Singapore's foreign minister said.

Foreign Minister George Yeo said unless Burma's authorities handled the situation carefully, the credibility of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations would be in jeopardy.

Transcripts of Yeo's remarks during a debate in parliament were released to the media late Friday.

Yeo was asked about the impact of Burma's chairmanship of Asean next year, which has sparked a US warning it would boycott a series of meetings in Rangoon unless the army-ruled state improves its human rights record.

The European Union has also been uneasy about Burma's leadership of the group. Chairmanship of Asean is rotated annually among the bloc's 10 members in alphabetical order.

"We have a problem. Although we have not formally discussed this in Asean, I know that many of the foreign ministers in Asean worry about it," Yeo said. AFP

HOLY WEEK etc.
GO QUALITY!
LADY OF GUADALUPE
Adam's

BRANDED & GENERIC PRODUCTS
•HIGH STANDARD QUALITY
•IN BLISTER PACK
•AT VERY REASONABLE PRICE
•DISTRIBUTED IN HOSPITALS & DRUGSTORES NATIONWIDE
STEINBACH PRODUCTS, INC.
DEALERS / DISTRIBUTORS ARE WELCOME

EMBARRASSED by BAD BREATH?

YAMAHA SCHOOL OF MUSIC PHILIPPINES, INC.
now opens enrollment for the
INTEGRATED MUSIC COURSE
MAJOR COURSES OFFERED:
Brass & Woodwind • Strokers • Guitar • Percussion • Piano • Violin/Strings • Voice
Summer Classes start March 28, 2005 and we are now accepting enrollment for June 2005.
For more information visit our Head Office at 2nd Floor, Yujuinpan Building, 939 Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City, 1200
Telephone: 886-4046, 897-2262 or 886-8000 (celebrating all department)
E-mail: yamahamusic@philcom.com.ph
www.yspumusic.com

Family Vacation Package
Php 10,999.00 / person
Escape to our Leisure World
Couple's Get-away Package
Php 3,791/person
Isla Verde
Tel. Nos. (63 2) 887-8474, (63 2) 843-3871 Fax No. 828-1363
www.escapeleisurevacations.com info@escapeleisurevacations.com

Send resumés instantly
VISIT US AT
www.jobmarketonline.com
JOB Market

* 2 yrs. warranty on compressor
* 2 yrs. warranty on parts and labor
HOME MATE
AIRCONDITIONERS

Teaching Children 1.5-6.5 Years Since 1988
Early Achieverz
ENROLL your child NOW!
Toddler • Nursery • Kindergarten SY 2005-2006
231 Reposo St., Makati : 895-7891/890-3380
75 Sgt. E. Rivera St., Q.C. : 365-2424/365-4084
90 Greenmeadows Ave., Q.C. : 634-3891/633-1711
532 T. Majoue St., Manila : 734-3888

NOTICE TO Q.C. TAXPAYERS
SB
THE CITY TREASURER SHALL HOLD AN AUCTION SALE OF ALL REAL PROPERTY WITH DELINQUENT TAX PAYMENTS ON LAND, BUILDING AND MACHINERIES AT 10:00 A.M., ON APRIL 8, 2005, 2nd FLOOR TAXPAYER'S LOUNGE, QUEZON CITY HALL.
IN THIS CONNECTION, ALL TAXPAYERS ARE ADVISED TO SETTLE/UPDATE REALTY TAX ARREARAGES BEFORE THE SAID DATE TO AVOID INCLUSION OF THE PROPERTY IN THE SAID AUCTION SALE.
(Sgd.) VICTOR B. ENDRIGA, Ph. D.
City Treasurer

NERA
TO ALL OUR DEAR CUSTOMERS:
BECAUSE YOU ARE IMPORTANT,
YOU
DESERVE BETTER SERVICE
8452971
has been changed to
849 – N E R A (6372)
"Our new Customer Call Center"

Assad to announce Lebanon pullback; US wants more

BEIRUT—Syria will announce on Saturday a partial pullout of troops from Lebanon, Lebanese sources said, but US President George W. Bush remained unchallenged of a full withdrawal would satisfy Washington.

"When we say withdraw we mean complete withdrawal—no half-hearted measures," Bush told an audience in New Jersey on Friday. "Syrian troops, Syrian intelligence services must get out of Lebanon now."

Bush called in an interview published earlier for all Syrian forces in or out by May to clear the way for free elections.

In a speech to Syria's parliament, President Bashar al-Assad is expected to announce the pullout of some troops completely from Lebanon and the redeployment of the rest close to the border, Lebanese political sources said on Friday.

Abdel Halim Khaddam, former minister in the Syrian-backed Lebanese government which resigned on Monday and the source would adhere to the Taif Accord which ended Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

"Syria will redeploy its forces in line with Taif," he said.

The agreement stipulates Syrian forces be redeployed to the eastern Bekaa Valley, and lines that the Lebanese and Syrian governments agree on how long these forces stay.

In a sign of high tension, a land grenade was buried in a Syrian position in the valley, but no one was injured in Lebanon security sources said.

Syria has controlled the Lebanese economy since 2000, pulling some forces to the Bekaa and some back to Syria, but has maintained forces in and around Beirut and in southern Lebanon.

Pressure on Damascus has intensified since former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Al-Hariri was assassinated last month in a bombing many Lebanese Shiite militia, Syria denies his involvement.

While the pressure from Arab leaders is veiled, Western governments have become increasingly blunt. US officials said Washington and European allies wanted to be ready to act quickly, perhaps with sanctions and a tougher UN resolution, if Syria failed to pull out. Reuters

COLD EUROPE
Picture taken March 4 shows the Champs-Elysees avenue in Paris covered with snow. Temperatures plummeted to a record low in the Northern hemisphere as a foreign arctic cold snap disrupted air travel, he said France is evacuate a prison and kept thousands of children from their classrooms. AFP

Bangladesh first to destroy land mine stockpile

DHAKA—Bangladesh has destroyed its stockpile of nearly 300,000 landmines, becoming the first country to heavily mined South Asia to get rid of the weapons under a UN treaty the army said Saturday.

Bangladesh's destruction of the landmines under the Ottawa Treaty banning Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention was handed by the Canadian government.

"We destroyed all our stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines by 4th. 20," an army spokesperson said.

The tiny Indian Ocean archipelago of the Maldives is the only other South Asian nation to have signed the Ottawa treaty banning landmines which kill civilians long after wars have ended and render useless huge swathes of arable land in some of the poorest nations.

Bangladesh began destroying the landmines in early November.

The landmines were brought to the army's ordnance factory near the capital, Dhaka. In destruction, the army spokesperson said.

Bangladesh's army is keeping 13,000 mines to be used for training soldiers for missions, including UN peacekeeping assignments.

"We've kept limited stock for training purpose as army officials sometimes operate in heavily mined regions during their UN peacekeeping duties," the spokesperson, who wished to remain anonymous, said.

Bangladesh acquired the landmines from China, Iran, India, Pakistan, the United States and former Yugoslavia, the 2003 Landmine Monitoring Report said. AFP

Pope preparing for Sunday Angelus

ROME... Pope John Paul II spent a peaceful night at Rome's Gemelli hospital overnight and was preparing to take part in his traditional Sunday Angelus blessing from hospital for a second time.

Italian spokesperson Joaquin Navarro-Valls told reporters on Friday the Pontiff would participate in the Angelus in the same way as last Sunday, giving his blessing with his hand from his hospital room window with the passage being read out loud for him to include.

"The Angelus will be like last Sunday. The Pope will participate, giving his blessing," Navarro-Valls had said on Friday.

The arrangement for the papal participation in the Angelus were expected to be confirmed by the Vatican on Saturday.

Doctors performed Rome surgery on Feb. 24 after John Paul II was rushed to hospital for a second time in a month with severe breathing complications due to the flu and his long-standing Parkinson's disease.

On Friday the Vatican spokesperson said the Pope's breathing and voice therapy following his tracheotomy last week were "continuing well." AFP

Attention: Shipping Lines, Resorts, Security Agencies, Military, Hospitals

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

Night Vision Binocular (Monocular) | Night Vision Binocular (Goggle)

SEE IN TOTAL DARKNESS

Starting a business? Working at home? Based out of Metro Manila?

INCREASE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY and ENHANCE YOUR IMAGE!

Have a Makati Virtual Office for as low as 17,287 a month!

Call Us: 7596790

Review with the world leader in test prep.

ICSEC-KAPLAN

The pathway to global career opportunities

Nibor Diamond Buying Office of the Philippines

NIBOR

INSTANT CASH FOR DIAMONDS

for 1 1/2 carat & above, antiques and modern jewelry. Also old-cut diamonds.

We Buy Diamonds! Cash Paid Instantly

ALL TRANSACTIONS KEPT CONFIDENTIAL

Tel.: 725-1931 (Greenhills)
739-4749 (Cubao)
Mobile: (0917) 630-3488
Monday - Sunday 10am - 5pm
Certified Jewelry at the Jewellery Concourse, Shopping Center San Juan, Metro Manila

INTERNATIONALLY EXPERIENCED GEMOLOGISTS

ROLEX

BUY REPAIR
PAWN BUFF
SELL SERVICE

We Buy Diamonds! Cash Paid Instantly

Accepts diamonds 2 carats and up preferably round, emerald or old miner's (Antique) cut.

Guaranteed to give you the HIGHEST appraisal for your diamonds!

Only at

JOAILLIER
fine jewelry

All transactions strictly confidential

810-8855 • 815-3191 • 0926-7093812

HOMEMADE FOODSTUFF

CALL!: 438-4571
426-6688 • 426-2165
426-6851 • 426-6876
426-5441 • 426-7270
FREE DELIVERY

Innovate. Educate. GCIC.

Nursing

Computer Science

Highly Competent Faculty

State of the art facilities, centralized aircon

Affordable tuition

Scholarships available to deserving students

Up-to-date curriculum with enriched program geared towards enhancing probability of employment locally and abroad.

Limited slots. Foreign students accepted

MNL - FEU - SYD

MNL - FEU - NY

MNL - FEU - LON

FEU, your ticket to opportunities

www.feu.edu.ph
Tel. No. 736-00-36
Nicanor Reyes Street, Sampaloc, Manila

China: Never to Taiwan independence

BEIJING—Premier Wen Jiabao vowed Saturday never to permit former independence for Taiwan as he opened a session of China's figurehead parliament that is to enact an anti-secession law aimed at the self-ruled island.

In a particularly televised speech, Wen also said China is aiming for 8 percent economic growth this year as it tries to stem a surging expansion that leaders worry could spark financial problems.

Wen gave no details of the anticipated law, which Taiwanese leaders say could set the stage for a military attack. Beijing claims Taiwan, which split from China in 1949, as part of its territory.

Speaking before lawmakers in the cavernous Great Hall of the People, Wen said the law reflects the "unswerving determination of the Chinese people to... never allow secessionist forces working for 'Taiwan independence' to separate Taiwan from China."

Wen also promised to spend heavily on easing politically volatile poverty in China's vast countryside, where low incomes and heavy taxes have sparked violent protests.

Communist leaders regard rural anger as their most pressing domestic issue, though poverty and social unrest were overshadowed by anniversary over the planned antisecession law in advance of the National People's Congress session. A final vote on the law is scheduled for March 14, the last day of the congress.

Wen said all farm taxes will be eliminated next year and promised that by 2007 every Chinese child can receive nine years of schooling—an extraordinary ambitious in a country where incomes per person average just US$1,000 (yuan7500) a year. Children from poor families will be exempt from state fees and receive free textbooks, the premier said, though he didn't make clear whether they will still have to pay meals.

"Solving the problems facing agriculture, rural areas and farmers remains a top priority of our work," Wen said, with President Hu Jintao and other Chinese leaders in grey-toned Mao-style suits.

The 2,985-member NPC apparent legislature already decided by the ruling Communist Party. But the body also serves as a way to keep communist leaders in touch with crisis-changing, increasingly capitalist society and provides a high-profile stage for announcing economic policy and initiatives such as the anti-secession law.

As the session opened, hundreds of police and plainclothes security agents stood guard outside the Great Hall and on adjacent Tiananmen Square to prevent disturbances.

At least two people were detained, Deutsche Bundesbank a weeping, elderly woman in shabby clothes after a visit outside the Great Hall after she shouted about a dispute she said had been going on for 20 years. An ethnic Chinese man from abroad was detained after unfurling a banner protesting an investment project gone sour.

The legislature coincides with reports that Beijing plans to dismiss unpopular Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa.

Tung was in move with the on Saturday afternoon and was seen flying on business, according to an official who asked not to be identified. The official said the morning's agenda wasn't known yet and he declined to provide other details.

Training to the economy Wen promised to push ahead with reforms that have turned China's eastern cities into export-driven powerhouses and drastically lifted incomes.

Wen promised to create 9 million more jobs despite the lowest growth target set in field—missions conference—4 percent.

Wen's two hour speech, interrupted repeatedly by applause, focused on domestic concerns, for a passing reference to foreign affairs. Wen sounded cautious about Taiwan, saying China would oppose secession and hegemony—Beijing's term for sweeping US global power. AP

A VIEW of the opening session of the annual National People's Congress, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing March 5. China opened the annual session of its National People's Congress, one of the world's largest legislatures, where it is due to pass a law aimed at curbing any Taiwanese bid for formal independence. AFP

Early 'hobbit' human was smart

WASHINGTON—They are the researchers lured ancient Indonesian island until about 12,000 years ago had brains so surprisingly sophisticated that the creatures may represent a previously unrecognized species of early humans, or hominids, scientists reported Thursday.

CAT scans of the inside of a skull—among the bones of eight individuals found in a cave on the Indonesian island of Flores—suggest brains that would favor skilled advanced behavior such as toolmaking, the interconnected team of researchers said.

"They said further study of the skull of the avaricus, nicknamed "the Hobbit" after a literary character, showed it clearly was a normal adult of its species, not a cretin or diseased specimen, as some scientists alleged.

"I am hooked now," said Dean Falk of Florida State University, who studied CAT scans to make a virtual cast of the inside of the creature's skull.

"I thought we were going to see a little chimpanzee-like brain and I was wrong. Nothing like this has been seen before," she told a telephone briefing.

Falk saw features that would have allowed the "Hobbit" to have made the tools found in the Indonesian cave, to use fire and to hunt as a group.

"I never thought I would see it in a brain this small," she said.

Homo floresiensis stood only about one meter tall and had a brain about a third the size of modern adult humans.

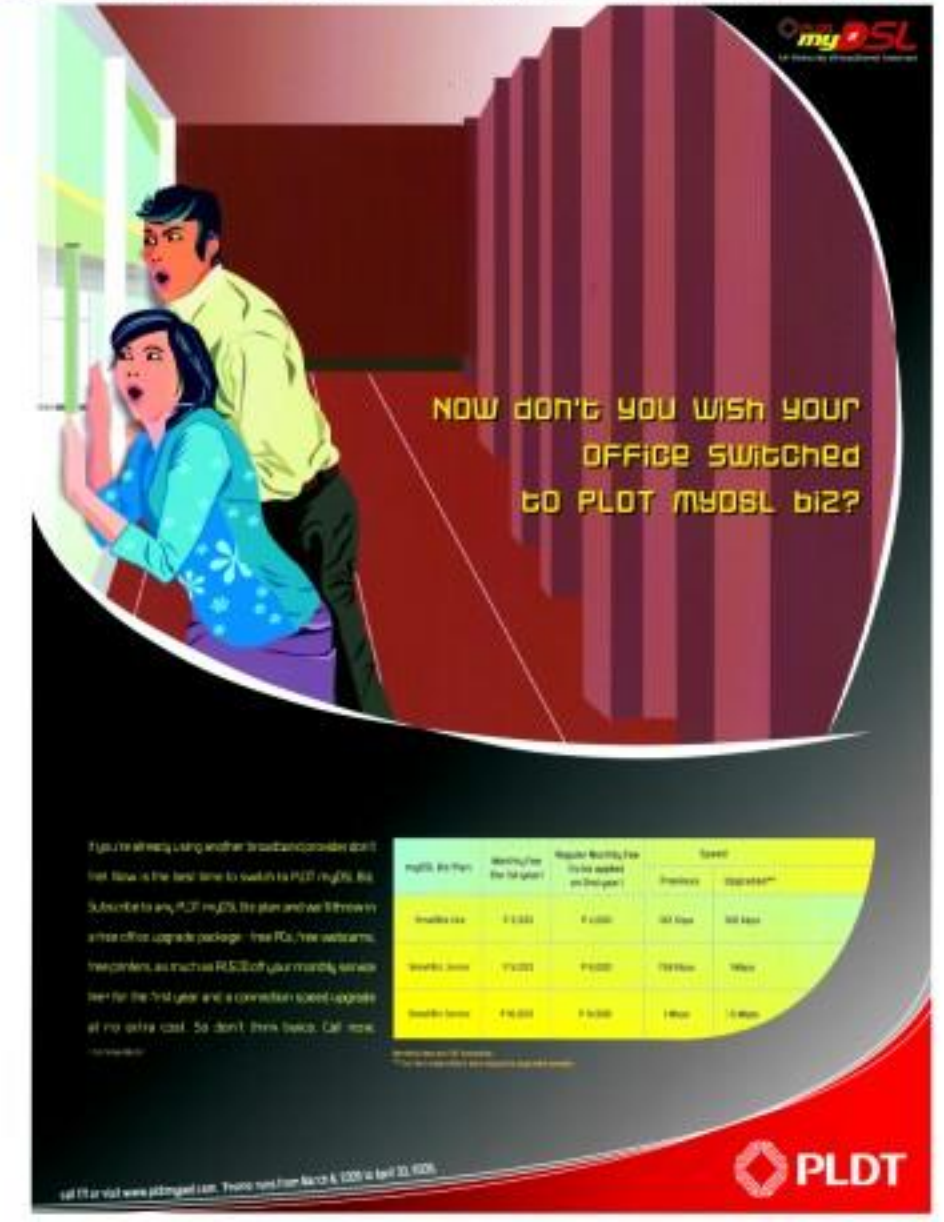
It had long arms and would have walked upright.

"We know from the wrist and ankle bone little features, from little short-thigh bones, were bowing things like pygmy elephants, were making fire and were making stone tools," said Mike Morwood of the University of New England in Australia, who led the initial research that uncovered the bones.

The discovery, announced last October, was met with surprise and some skepticism. Critics said the bones in fact represented some sort of stunted or perhaps something suffering from a condition called microcephaly and not a unique species of early human.

But, writing in the journal Science, the team of US, Australian and Indonesian researchers said their unusual study of the inside of the "Hobbit's" brain case showed it was (minus) to Homo erectus, which lived from 2 million years ago to about 10,000 years ago.

"Standing it was not like a little adolescent Homo sapiens brain, it was different," Falk said. Reuters



ISSN 0116-2442 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. 19 No. 68

OPINION

Publisher ... Editor in Chief ... Managing Editor ... Associate Editor ... Associate Editor ... Opinion Editor ... Opinion Editor ... City Editor ... Assistant City Editor ... Editorial Consultant ... Chief Photographer ... Art & Design Director ...

Board Chairman ... President ... Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing ... Senior Vice President for Corporate Services ... VP for Advertising ... and for Circulation ...

All rights reserved. Except as provided by law, no part of the Philippine Daily Inquirer may be reproduced or transmitted in any manner, electronic or mechanical, or stored in any retrieval system, without prior written permission.

Suicide notes

THE CONTROVERSIAL passage of the 2005 national budget is an object-lesson in politics as practiced in the Philippines. The details paint a vivid portrait of the two houses of Congress as they actually conduct their business: paying lip service to neoliberalized principles, for instance, and then using the resources of the legislative process itself to pursue their self-interest. Or maneuvering against each other to maximize a perceived disadvantage, and then launching a preemptive war of perceptions.

EDITORIAL

As we pointed out yesterday, the suggestion from Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago that legislators commit mass suicide as a form of public service is redundant; our lawmakers have done a masterful job of shooting themselves fatally in the foot. But there are at least two vital lessons to be learned from this orgy of self-destruction.

Legislative veterans know that the real action is in the "third chamber." We have known this for years; a legislative measure takes final shape in the bicameral conference committee, when differences between Senate and House versions are reconciled. What all too few of us know—before the budget controversy erupted—was that the entire, elaborate machinery for approving a bill is one house, from first to third readings. Even committee hearings to plenary debates, had become a mere first step, an initial negotiating gambit, for the horse-trading that takes place in the house. In other words, for legislative veterans, the "action" in the respective chambers is almost irrelevant.

That is why the House can pass its version of the General Appropriations Act, which was essentially the same as the one submitted by Malacañang, and which, among many other details, pared congressional pork-barrel allocations down from P70 million to P40 million each. Why? Because the House leadership promised to restore the original amounts during the bicam.

Some congressmen, like Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, have said as much. "It will be a big headache for the House leadership. What happens now is it is communicated to the membership that their concerns would be addressed at the bicameral conference committee?" Other congressmen have implied it by their intransigent reaction. House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, for instance, rashly called for the Senate's abolition, only because the Senate's adoption of the House version of the budget, in vote, had upset the House leaders' political calculus. And at least one congressman, Tagaig Rafaven Reps. Alan Peter Cayetano, asked the House leadership to admit that it had misunderstood, for leaving the passage of the Malacañang version in the first place.

All these prove that when the House passed its version last year, congressmen had no intention of honoring the reduction in the pork barrel they had promised with much fanfare. Their plan was to restore the original amounts in the bicam, or to still until a reenactment of the 2003 budget, with the old allowances, became inevitable.

The "dignity of the chamber" covers a multitude of sins. The whole hoary notion of "institutional dignity" may be at the root of the Senate's extraordinary decision to recall the approval of its version of the budget, and then to adopt that of the House. Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson's seemingly disdainful of the Senate's attempt to "reclassify" P1.2 billion in non-military intelligence funds, aired on the same day President Macapagal-Arroyo rebuked both houses of Congress for the budget impasse, pressured the Senate with a public relations nightmare.

Some commentators believe that Lacson was merely confused. Even granting that on the one issue the former presidential candidate has followed more closely, he had jumped to an unwarranted conclusion, the damage was still all too real. And "institutional dignity" required that the Senate move to contain it—even at the cost of undoing all the work done in the last two months.

That because they were caught by one of their members, the only way they can divert attention from their own shame is to slap us with dirt that should properly cling to their faces," publisher-congressman Teodoro Locsin Jr. thundered on the floor of the House. But because Locsin, too was defending the dignity of his chamber, his remarks naturally become suspect.

That is what happens when—to extend Hemarich's metaphor—lawmakers bring the entire sausage factory crashing down on themselves.

A patriot of our race

SEPARATE OPINION

Jaqueline A. Cruz

Jose P. Laurel Sr. was a striking contrast to some of our present-day leaders

THIS Wednesday will be the 115th birth anniversary of Dr. Jose P. Laurel, who occupies and deserves an honored place in our nation's history. He served with distinction in the three departments of our government, as President of the Philippines during the Japanese occupation, as a member of the Senate before and after World War II, and as a justice of the Supreme Court, where he wrested for most powerful pen, according to Manuel L. Quezon.

In his youth, he enrolled as a pensionado in Yale, where he took special studies in Constitutional Law that was to serve him well as a lawyer, as a law professor, as a magistrate, and in his present career: it was his masterly of this subject that made him the undisputed leader during martial rule and the framer of the 1973 Philippine members of the cabinet, as well as the Council of State. The feisty Wood, a former veteran governor, knew he had been beaten and now retired.

One of Laurel's first decisions as a justice is Angara v. Electoral Commission, 63 Phil. 139, where he explained the doctrine of separation of powers with such lucidity and brilliance that it has yet to be surpassed by his successors on the Supreme Court. His definition of social justice in the old case of Calalang v. Williams, 70 Phil. 76, decided in 1936, is reminded in our law schools as the classic description of this constitutional concept.

It was out of respect that we all called him the Old Man although he was still young when he passed away at 67. He was repeatedly head of the Senate of the Philippines that he founded and called "the Monastery of the Dean." For as president, he was Dr. Dewey as the executive secretary, Jean Jose Adeva of the college of arts and sciences, and Lia Dewey's assistant, was named the Badging school. Inc. Hence Antonio was the treasurer, and Jose Clara M. Recto was the dean of our law school, with prominent veteran general Ambrosio Padilla as vice dean.

I became a law reviewer in Political Law because of Dr. Laurel. In one of the classes in the subject, the professor, a well-known "senior," had assigned to dispute over the students' limitations. I requested this problem to Dr. Laurel and said I had taken it upon himself to keep in the dean pending the appointment of the assistant's replacement. The Old Man saw no problem and acted decisively. He appointed me to take over the subject, thus beginning my own specialization of "more and more about less and less," as he put it.

When I remember him about Dr. Laurel was when, as president of our occupied country, he was presented by the Japanese government-in-exile Philippines to fight the Allied forces. Laurel refused. many of us who were of draft age, and our students persons as well, were enlisted by and resistance when he announced over the radio that not a single Filipino would be compelled to fight for Japan. The Emperor could have executed him for his defiance but prudently desisted because they knew the whole country was behind him.

It was one of the ironies of Laurel's life that for leading the nation during the period of the Japanese occupation, he was later accused of collaboration with the enemy. He voluntarily delivered himself in his trial and would have been acquitted had not President Manuel A. Roxas ended the proceedings with his amnesty proclamation of 1948.

Laurel ran in the 1949 presidential election, which many believe he won but for "the brisk and the brave," as Lansac once noted. For his opponent, incumbent President Elpidio Quirino. The presumptive winner was vindicated in 1951, when he topped the election for the Senate seats an overwhelming majority. During this last term, he authored, over the organized resistance of the Catholic hierarchy, the law requiring the study of the works of Rizal in all public and private schools in the country.

Jose P. Laurel Sr. was a striking contrast to some of our present-day leaders who now pay him lip service. He was a true nationalist, not a political lackey of foreign imperialists. He was erudite in law and philosophy unlike the pretenders ignoramuses and misfits in the senate today. He understood integrity and courage of conviction are an angry indictment of the current immoral and classless public service. He was, without question our outgoing era, a patriot of our race.

Out of sight

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

Fr. Antonio Pernia, SVD, the superior general of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) is in town for a visit. He is the first Asian, the first Filipino to assume general of one of the biggest male religious congregations (with about 6,000 members worldwide) in the world today. From where he sits, he has to be on top of so many concerns and problems, and yet he don't look like one lost his touch for seeing and hearing not what is good, what is promising to envision.

What gives him joy he said, is not so much the wealth and the stability of our resources, but the goodness and the efforts of ordinary trying to live out their missionary commitments in a simple, quiet, joyful way. More than to palaces, more than fortresses, more than banks, he said, we need leaders who are genuine who feel, encourage, affirm and challenge us to move on. He sorely people who make us feel good about ourselves and, in effect, encourage us to be even better. We need people who show in the "already," and point us to the "not yet" or as journeys on.

* * *

It is unbelievable how narrow and closed-minded some people could be. I was sharing with a friend my experience of hosting the celebration of a synaxarion on board a plane from Batanes. It was such a genuine Filipino moment for this various who, in years accepted God's love and forgiveness, it was also such a humbling moment for me to be there where the sun ready to accept God. Really. And what did my friend say, when I was through with my sharing? "Sorry, the individual faculties to hear confessions in such cases may have been suspended, but, never your wrong in my book!" Out of sight, out of sight (vulgo: death). Here was grace abounding, and all he could think of were the drivers and what was wearing.

* * *

Fourteen young men will be ordained priests at the Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay this March 6, 2005 by Bishop Tagle of the Diocese of Imus. "Ready and Willing" is the motto of our SVD Class 2005. Ten of them will be assigned to foreign missions, i.e., Mozambique, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Brazil. Let us praise and thank God for the gift of vocations, the gift of priesthood and the gift of missionaries in our day and time.

* * *

May we not lose sight of the fact that we all are missionaries in this world, and that we all should be busy telling the "Good News" to others people—wherever we are, and whenever we do. Are you yourself a "good news"?

* * *

We will be sharing the good news at our common Filipino catechist in Hong Kong at the Sir Yng Secondary School in Kowloon this coming Sunday, March 13. What people need to hear is that God is with them wherever they are and that God loves them wherever they are. May we all be inspired by introducing him to someone who loves unconditionally and may we all be generous in people by reminding the loving God so every and every moment of their lives. Let us thank God, and let us see hold back God on other people.

* * *

Reminder: was the first wedding in our family. We did not have our since Rev. We printed a nephew in 28 names. Praise God!

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, remind me that if you are out of sight is my life, I am missing a lot. Amen.

'Leveling the Playing Field'

REVILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

court," Panganiban declares (thus such cynicism) which the Supreme Court struck down because they were tainted with grave abuse of discretion.

The first, during the administration of President Fidel V. Ramos, was a Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) entered into by Anton Caneda Inc. and Subic Telecommunications Corporation, and the Public Estates Authority (PEA) for the development of 600 hectares of land in Mariveles, Bataan, into a Mixed-Use Community (also referred to as Mariveles Township) comprising some 197 hectares. The JVA required Anton to reclaim said portion on additional 200 hectares of land to be titled in the name of PEA.

When the case originated in courts, it was dubbed "the grandmother of all cases." The contract had "consisted to a private entity 197 hectares of reclaimed land worth P5.9 billion, and to reclaim an additional 200 hectares of submerged land worth P6 billion for a total cost of P11.9 billion, all for the measly sum of P1,500 per square meter considering that the reclaimed area of land next door was P6,000 per square meter. The difference in price is a staggering P4.5 billion, equivalent to the budget of the entire Bataan province for 17 years and more than three times the Marcos family deposits that the court ordered in favor of the government."

Thinking that there could done this case once then, the undersigned at some P1.40 billion and no one has been held accountable?

The second case was the Fraser case. In 1997, the Philippine Export Zone Authority, Inc. was awarded a "Concession Agreement" (CA) for the construction and operation of Subic Bay Terminal. Under the Build Operate and Transfer Law, by 1999, the CA was awarded to Fraser Inc. for "building and operating the Subic Bay Terminal" to the CA were signed in 1999, 2000 and 2001 but without public bidding. (This was during my Executive term.) The original CA, the amended CA and the three Supplementary were all challenged in the Supreme Court. The high court ruled that the Build-Operate-and-Transfer Law requires that private projects to government agreements must be awarded through competitive public bidding save those enumerated in the amendments and supplements to the original contract, the Court ruled that since an award is made, "all that is left to be done by the parties is to execute the necessary agreements and implement them. No material changes to the parties' rights can thereafter be allowed. Otherwise, public bidding becomes a mockery and the mandated public interest is not served."

Today, some of Cabinet secretaries, undersecretaries and heads of bureaus have been charged by the Ombudsman for their roles in the award of P1.4 billion to Fraser.

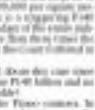
The third controversial agreement is the Mega Pacific Contract. Last November, after the 10 presidential elections, I wrote about this particular case (see "Mega Pacific Contract Stinks") on the issue of the government's failure to collect upon P600 million for machines and software that were never used in our new computerized elections. The Supreme Court invalidated the contract, declaring that "the Commission on Elections had the power to 'lease, purchase, acquire or rent voting machines and other equipment,' in addition to the power to 'conduct pilot tests and simulation exercises.' But the power to 'lease, purchase, acquire or rent' is a limitation of the power to 'conduct pilot tests and simulation exercises.' In other words, the power to lease, purchase, acquire or rent machines must be exercised in connection with pilot tests and simulation exercises. It does not authorize the Commission on Elections to enter into a contract for the lease, purchase, acquisition or rental of machines that will be used in the actual elections."

We are happy to note that in all these cases, the high court, by its decisions, was able to send clear and unwavering signals that government contracts must be executed less hastily and circumspectly. The rule of law must prevail over the rule of men. And if these decisions serve to save any amount, the recipient must also be brought to justice.

Back to the past?

AT LARGE

Nina Jimenez-David



IF THE THE you said this, I would be up here, back in my MAO member of the Philippine delegation to the United Nations 1995 Conference on the Status of Women. The meeting will review the compliance of governments around the world with the Beijing Platform for Action.

The PDPFP is the document signed at the end of the Fourth World Conference of Women held in Beijing 10 years ago. That conference was considered, and I hesitated, as the decades-old struggle for women's rights to be part of the human rights movement and in all spheres of life.

Ten (10 years after Beijing, as UN Secretary General Kofi Annan reported in his talk at the opening of the 49th session, governments "have come up and the growth of HIV/AIDS have begun to be tackled more equitably."

Other governments since the 1995 Beijing women's conference have recognized that women's rights are human rights, and that the empowerment and growth, Annan noted in his speech, hold, even as governments search for ways to make women's participation in development real and lasting, substantive and meaningful, not token or symbolic. "We must also be prepared to examine how the resources needed for progress in development

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to [illegible]

Editor Jaime V. Bautista Jr.

VIEW FROM LOYOLA HEIGHTS

Beneath the fiscal crisis

By the Economics and Political Science Departments*
Ateneo de Manila University

THE PRESENT fiscal crisis is merely a symptom of a deeper development crisis ailing the Philippine economy. The crisis is manifested in the persistent and worsening uncompetitiveness of the manufacturing and agricultural sectors, and is perpetuated by the inability of the state to reduce inconspicuous elements and similar structures that encourage inefficiency and rent-seeking dispositions.

Over the years, the "boom-bust" behavior of the Philippine economy has persisted, and a sustained take-off remains elusive.

The services sector has seen sterling growth since the early 1980s, but the economy's potential growth is perennially constrained by the erratic and declining growth of the manufacturing (ergo, export) sector, low growth in the crop and fishery sectors, and the mostly negative growth performance of the forestry sector. Manufacturing declined steadily over the past two decades, with its gross domestic product (GDP) share dropping from 25 percent in the 1970s to 22 percent by the late 1980s and early 2000s.

In contrast, GDP share of manufacturing sharply increased in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. There is a tendency to blame the decline in Philippine manufacturing on trade liberalization, exchange rate policy and the outward-focused investment incentives. Certainly the protected manufacturing in the neighboring countries was accompanied by sizable growth in their manufacturing exports. This reflects improved international competitiveness, which can only come from a more liberalized trade environment rather than a tightly protected one.

Monopoly power

The transition to an export-oriented industrialization strategy with foreign capital involvement in the 1990s has been led by our dedicated, hardworking, mentally astute counterparts elsewhere. Apart from an limited impact on value added, employment and net trade, trade liberalization has not resulted in a reduction in the degree of monopoly power. It would normally be expected from such market opening.

A World Bank report in 2000 noted that the corporate sector remained highly concentrated. Revenue statistics of 1997 found that over 40 percent of the 1,000 largest corporations ranked by sales were Philippine owned, and 2.6% belonged to only 10 corporate groups. The value of the 216 group-owned companies amounted to 51 percent of the total sales of the largest Philippine-owned corporations.

The same study also found that in 1997, among publicly listed non-financial firms, the combined shares of the largest holder controlled on average 40 percent of the equity, while the top 5 shareholders had majority control of 1 out of every 4 listed companies. The report mentioned that this figure understates the prevalence of concentration as less than 10 percent of the 1,600 largest corporations are listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

An Asian Development Bank study measured the degree of monopoly in the economy using indices of mark-up ratios in a gauge (Hodge 2004). Results indicated that while trade liberalization was undertaken in the 1990s, the degree of monopoly increased. The study attributed the rise in mark-up ratios to the firms' conscious efforts to maximize their profit rate. In turn, the ability to keep the profit rate was made possible by lower industrial rate of capital and the labor productivity premium. As a result, rents resulting arose unplayed.

Income inequality

A study by Aldaba (2004) considered the possibility that industry rents accounted for (concentration ratio) for the top four firms in Philippine industries. Her results show that the rents, having rents) has become more and more highly concentrated, such that average rates having increased from 71 percent in 1988 to 81 percent in 1998. Furthermore, the proportion of manufacturing industries with concentration ratios ranging from 70 percent to 100 percent rose from 45 percent in 1988 to about 50 percent by 1998.

The evidence thus points to an increased concentration of economic power through the 1990s, when economic efforts to consolidate under trade liberalization should have generated competition through market accessibility that trade should have would have normally provided. This increased monopoly power exist in a more liberalized trade regime appeared to make the Philippine experience with liberalization somewhat unique. With this trend, it is not surprising that income inequality worsened through the 1990s in spite of economic growth.

The high degree of economic

Investors in industry has led to our country's export performance of predominant and simple terms. Basic economic theory teaches that monopoly power leads to lower (than perfectly competitive) industry output and inhibits the use of more widely beneficial (e.g., more labor intensive) modes of production.

Trap

The last huge our economy mired in a low level equilibrium trap" that kept us from attaining the much higher rates of economic growth enjoyed by our neighbors since the 1980s.

The problem is that government is not but heavily largely incompetent in using its limited resources to promote people growth. Our economic history has proved the way for a more consistently expansive but vested interests.

The industrial sector has been dominated by an oligarchy comprising a combination of three streams (mainly of capital and land) and allies in public authority. Through a series of policy reversals from the competitive rationing scheme of the late 1960s and the 1970s, the government has protected certain groups and cronies by preventing other firms from introducing changes that would increase competition and productivity.

On top of this, certain regulatory agencies have been "captured" by the very firms they are supposed to regulate, further perpetuating monopolistic tendencies in key economic sectors. Over the years, the oligarchy used its economic base to coalesce with the state, thereby perpetuating the dominant ruling coalition of its economic and political powers.

Agenda for deconcentration

Paul Krugman once [illegible] coined the term "big push," referring to the concerted economy-wide and public policy-led effort to accelerate economic growth, deepen markets and promote more. Failures (Rosenstein-Rodan 1961). The "big push" requires a state committed to genuine development and relatively autonomous from oligarchic interests.

It is time of a strong republic is to [illegible] today, the government must take decisive steps toward the deconcentration and transformation of the agricultural economy of political economic power that have long been weakening the republic by fostering failure of excellence and economic development that have served to widen, rather than narrow the gaps in Philippine society.

We believe that consensus at the following 10 basic Agenda for Economic De-

Certain regulatory agencies have been "captured" by the very firms they are supposed to regulate

velopment should convincingly set the country on the right direction:

1 Shrink the injustices in the country's revenue system. The massive leakages in government revenue efforts should no longer be taken as a given. The agencies must be equipped, empowered and even armed (if need be, to make vast improvements in their revenue collection efforts. Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and Bureau of Customs (BOC) are now equipped with information and communication technology to expose intellectual fine exposing fraud to root out. Promising developments in tax compliance and revenue collection require much more work within these agencies, complemented with personnel/pay reforms (private sector included) measures.

2 Complete the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) in the coconut [illegible] areas. Studies have shown that failure in CARP's completion, rather than the program itself has dampened investments in agriculture. But these obstacles that agrarian reform beneficiaries and landowners, who have already complied with CARP, have more to improved farm productivity. It is the beneficiaries still facing the uncertainties CARP implementation as their landhold rights have been pulled, down investments in the agricultural sector. The solution is not to abandon CARP, but to accelerate it.

3 Accelerate the implementation of the [illegible] reform program. Unless political will is required to assure the deliberation of mutually agreed solutions for the [illegible] use of natural resources by different sectors of interested human rights to indigenous groups and community-based urban land reform [illegible] and forest housing initiatives should be pursued. Genuine power sector and transportation participation must be ensured in the micro-level programs requiring the disempowered poor. Encouraging them to experiment in various forms of workers' participation in the factory level could enhance social conflict and improve the investment climate.

4 Make small and medium enterprise (SME) development the government's center piece program by integrating the scattered and piecemeal SME development efforts into the sole mission of the Department of Trade and Industry. Various government departments and agencies particularly the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Cooperative Development Authority, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and Department of Interior and Local Government, have key roles to play in the efforts to make SMEs the engine of economic growth and job generation [illegible] more robust.

5 Strengthen some inconsistent to pursue long-term development [illegible] focus on [illegible] economic considerations. The government must refrain from using [illegible] reduce without undue influences from vested interests. Administrative and supervisory regulatory agencies must be insulated against the [illegible] capture". A coherent and comprehensive competition policy needs to be established with a strong [illegible] to enforce it (e.g. a Fair Trade Commission) built on the existing Tariff Commission). Multi-stakeholder participation and consultation must be an integral part of key government processes.

6 Institute a broad-based campaign against corruption. It would take convincing leadership at the top, presumed with genuine commitment and [illegible] by [illegible] to make the Philippines one of the top corrupt countries in the world. Political power must be delinked from economic power for the latter to become widely dispersed. A key element in curbing corruption is meaningful transparency, particularly and in terms of the integrity of basic records and information such as those of the Land Registration Authority, Civil Registry, Insurance and Exchange Commission (SEC, BOC and Land Transportation Office, among others.

7 Intensify decentralization of development initiatives. The growing list of unexpected "failures of good governance and [illegible] at the national level [illegible] country. We need a "second wave of decentralization" that will move beyond devolution [illegible] functions and structures directly provided for under the Local Government Code of 1991, [illegible] effect mechanisms for reinforcing the development-local best practices (e.g. Naga City, Puerto Princesa, Davao City and others) more widely, and undertake affirmative actions for the countryside to counteract the [illegible] in development. [illegible] [illegible] and many others.

8 Guarantee the public's right to information. While the right to public information is enshrined in the Constitution and is guaranteed by codes of conduct for public officials, there are no legally enforceable rights in this regard. That, is a supreme class the proposed "Right to Public Information Act" for removal and regulations that rank in restrict freedom of public expression such as the sedition and libel provisions in the Revised Penal Code be repealed.

9 Reform the political and electoral processes toward greater inclusiveness. Various bills have long been pending in various Congresses and previous. These include bills that would provide public funding for legitimate political parties, right standards on private political campaign contributions, banning of political dynasties, and overhaul of the electoral system. Reforms are needed to counteract the nation's politics from one that is focused on personalities to one that is focused on principles and issues.

10 Institutionalize mechanisms for [illegible] about [illegible] thereby eliminating present causes by financed from government's meager resources alone. Recent incidents have left us that one out of every three pesos in the budget is lost to corruption, [illegible] only one out of every nine pesos [illegible] actually reaches [illegible] and [illegible] is one of poverty, [illegible] need not be inevitable. The challenge is for active participation by people such "social cleansing" from the streets to the halls [illegible] in the country. Leadership [illegible] Aquino [illegible] Arroyo [illegible] and [illegible] a great [illegible] by our morality of being washed up to the national level.

Finally, any of these recommendations are new. We have widely agreed on most of them in the past as imperatives for the country. What has always been lacking is that sense of commitment called politics, call will, the genuine desire on the part of the nation's leaders to put aside personal interest in favor of the common good. But at the same for a strong republic will be [illegible] to [illegible] and [illegible] the critical way to go. Otherwise, the Philippines will be condemned to an existence characterized by persistent muddling through from crisis to crisis and never quite growing anywhere.

This is an abridged version of the paper "Beneath the Fiscal Crisis: Elusive Development Within the Republic" that the authors released on Feb. 28. The views expressed here represent those of the authors and not of the [illegible].

*Fernando Aldaba, Ateneo Administration; Gerardine Ateneo; Rolando Ateneo; Wilfredo Ateneo; Bert Ateneo; Chay Ateneo; Ateneo; Ateneo;

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Gerapota

2 kidnapped Iligan traders released

COTABATO CITY—The suspects in Mohaimin's kidnapping of two businessmen in Iligan City were forced to free their captives because of the intense military operation against them and after the family of one of the victims threatened to retaliate against the suspects' families, the military said yesterday.

Brig. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, commander of the Joint Task Force Katuan, said the family of Gerard Tomanan had threatened to retaliate the suspects' relatives if their son was not released.

The Tomananes are prominent figures in the Lanao provinces and are considered one of the largest political clans there.

"It's a traditional way of resolving kidnapping [in Lanao], tooth for a tooth," Dolorfino told radio station dxMD here.

Tomanan was handed over to civilian negotiators in the hinterlands of Bubit, Lanao del Norte, early morning Friday.

Tomanan and engineer Marcos Antel were driving toward Iligan City on Wednesday evening when ambushed by armed men at gunpoint.

Their drivers also was here recovered in Pantao-Ragat in Lanao del Norte, in which traces of blood were also found.

The following day, the kidnappers telephoned Jarid's wife demanding P10 million in ransom.

They also allowed Antel to speak with his wife to tell her he was wounded in the head after the suspects hit him for refusing to go with them.

The military, in coordination with local Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) which, later launched a manhunt.

Dolorfino said Tomanan and Antel were separated by their captors.

What Tomanan learned that he was the only one being released, he refused to leave.

"Tomanan at first refused to be freed without his friend engineer Jarid," Dolorfino said.

After a series of negotiations, the kidnappers, whom Dolorfino did not identify, agreed to released Jarid on the same day.

"We were closing in on the kidnappers' location that's why they were forced to release Jarid," he said of the joint military-MILF operation.

Dolorfino said no ransom had been paid to the kidnappers but said some amount of money was spent for the negotiations.

The military earlier presented a suspected list of the Mohaimin another group involved in kidnappings in Mindanao, and killed five of its members.

In retaliation, the Pentagon fired a rocket grenade in a village near a military camp, wounding at least seven civilians. The military said the attack was in retaliation for the military offensive. Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Military report tags slain dad as NPA member

By Norman Bordadora

THE ARMED Forces Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) has tagged slain Tarlac City Councilor Meriardo Cadiva as one of those who incited the violence that resulted in the picket line massacre at the Hacienda Luisita last November last year.

A Nolcom briefing paper obtained by the military following Magkaisang ng Dilginas-ekmo ilan Cadiva as one of the "prominent leftist personal persuasion" who allegedly agitated the laborers and farm workers at the hacienda.

"[The Nolcom's briefing paper on the Hacienda Luisita issue aforesaid] Councilor Cadiva is one of those on top of the list, that the military branded as agitators of the dispute... We have also received reports that the individuals on the Nolcom briefing paper have been warned of having a serious threat on their lives," AMP secretary general Danilo Ramos said.

The supposed Nolcom briefing paper also identified as among the hacienda agitators male personalities as Hacienda Motta Representatives Jaime Ocampo and Teddy Casiño, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano and Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza.

"[The briefing paper pointed] the scenario that these individuals from the local level up to the national level are the ones who instigated the strike," Ramos said.

According to the documents, Cadiva is a nephew of Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio Rosal, alias Ka Roger. The paper alleged that Rosal even recruited Cadiva for the small number of communists in the Tarlac 1st municipality.

Cadiva, reportedly in the meeting between leaders of the Hacienda workers, those from Central Azucarera de Tarlac and leaders of the CPP and New People's Army in the area.

The meeting reportedly planned the violence that would lead to a considerable number of deaths that would further increase the Hacienda workers.

A certain Danny Cadiva was also on the list. He was identified in the paper as a member of the Tarlac Provincial Committee of the NPA and also a nephew of Rosal's.

Dumaguete execs get lotto lesson

By Barry G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—For trying to regulate the operation of the national government's online lottery (Lotto), the vice mayor and the city legal officer have been suspended for 90 days.

Regional Trial Court Judge Virgilio C. Pinto has ordered Bernardo D. in Dumaguete has ordered the suspension of Vice Mayor William Ahlong and lawyer Ned Bey Luguitid, effective March 1.

Bernardo said the suspension was in accordance with the provision of Republic Act 6975 (Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act) and Supreme Court decisions which said that "preventive suspension is mandatory... while the criminal prosecution is pending in court."

The suspension was in relation to a case filed by a lotto operator here whose outlet was denied closure notice by the city government in 2000 and 2001 for, among others, failing to secure a mayor's permit.

Ahlong, reached for comment on Friday, said he found it ironic that he and Luguitid would have to be suspended and criminally charged when they were only implementing the law.

Ahlong and Luguitid are facing a criminal case filed in court by the Ombudsman in the Visayas based on a complaint lodged by Sarmelo Estrada, a lotto operator in the city, in connection with the 2003 closure of her lotto outlet.

The two city officials are now out on bail.

In 2001, Estrada's lotto outlet in Barangay Banilad, this city was padlocked on orders of City Mayor Agustin Perdices. She then filed a case against the mayor, which is still pending at the RTC here.

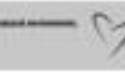
While waiting for the decision of the case, Estrada went to the Court of Appeals (CA) seeking a restraining order against the city government. In March 2002, the CA directed the city government to refrain from closing the complainant's establishment while the case was still pending in court.

To Many Filipino Christian
And Muslim Women,
The Worst War
Happens Not On Land,
Sea Or Air.

But In Their Wombs.

INQUIRER

Life begins in the womb, the first zone of peace. We can't be advocates of peace if we can't protect its natural environment.
Let us reject all means that destroy its ability to give life.
Stop the war. Keep the womb a zone of peace.


Teodora

Iloilo bishop asks GMA to abandon coal plants

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
INQ Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Iloilo Archbishop Angel Lagdameo has called on President Macapagal-Arroyo and other government officials to drop plans to put up coal-fired power plants in Iloilo.

"I appeal to (the President) to consider alternative sources of energy," Lagdameo told the faithful after celebrating Mass in a rally against coal plants on Thursday at the grounds of Iloilo provincial capitol.

The rally, attended by around 3,000 protesters, was the biggest so far against plans to put up 140-megawatt coal-fired plants in Concepcion and Barotac Viejo towns, both in northern Iloilo.

Protesters from parishes in Iloilo and students of Catholic universities in the city joined environmental advocates, non-government organizations and residents of Concepcion and Barotac Viejo in the rally held not in commemoration of the anniversary of last year's rejection by the Iloilo provincial board of a similar project in Barotac Viejo, Iloilo.

Lagdameo said the plans from putting up coal-fired power plants "will not outweigh their destructive effects on agriculture, fishing and human life in the future."

Calling on his flock

He called on his flock to firmly oppose the plants.

"It must not be our government that will suffer from the evil effects of the coal-fired power plants. But we are morally and morally obliged to save future generations from dire evil effects by doing what we are doing now," he concluding the Mass.

Two archbishops and six bishops in Western Visayas and Kalibo province earlier issued a pastoral letter opposing the plants in their dioceses and archdioceses.

Various Church groups have formed an alliance to block the projects. The groups include the Diocese of Iloilo of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, Protestors of Church People's Response, and Espousing Salvation para sa Kinabuhi.

Energy officials said the projects are necessary to bridge the projected energy supply deficit in Panay.

Government support

The projects have been supported by government officials led by the President, Senate President Franklin Drilon and Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr.

Adrian Hinojosa, assistant vice president for new business of Megaton Global, in an earlier interview has stressed the safety of the plant they are planning to put up in Barotac Viejo.

He said the plant would be constructed and operated consistent with environmental laws and regulations and would use technology that minimizes emissions.

But Frances Quimpo, executive director of the Center for Environmental Concerns, said even the advanced technology used by coal plants have not eliminated pollutants and emissions that are hazardous to the environment and human health.

CHILDREN enjoy the Ipiak Festival participants, during Baguio City's Panagbenga Festival.

Festival held to celebrate 'tapuy,' wine-making skills of Cordillerans

By Dyanne Caluza
INQ Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—A good morning from the tale of each of the three days are filled during the Ipiak Festival—a celebration of Cordillera arts, crafts and culture—signaled the commencement of the region's first native delicacy on Saturday.

Jars of tapuy (or tapoy), carefully prepared by the Cordillera's master brewers, were opened during the yapit (a ritual act of opening a jar of tapuy, accompanied by chants and prayers) by a crowd of more than 1,000 that gathered at Burnham Park there.

The Ipiak Festival, which was part of the activities of the Lang Kayam Flores Musical at Panagbenga, drew the best tapuy brewers in many seasoned brewers in the region.

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan acted as the festival's master of ceremonies when he led the prayer and chants inspiring Kalinga (opening) doing to open the event at the ceremony. Then cook-outs were having the rice wine, served in coconut shells and mixed in 24 jars (coffins jars).

As part of the festivities, 300 chickens were butchered and prepared in pinikpikan style. The chicken soup dish is a traditional dish common in households in the Cordillera villages.

To prepare the pinikpikan, a chicken is unconsciously hit with a stick until it dies. The chicken is roasted to remove its skin and then placed in a pot of boiling water. It is garnished with chunks of meat and flavored with salt.

"To better enjoy the camp, [we included in the activities] the cooking of pinikpikan. One cannot [enjoy the tapuy] without the [pinikpikan]," said Baguio artist Benito Bulalong, chair of the festival.

Bulalong said the tapuy is never eaten from the different areas of Benguet, Mt. Province and Ifugao.

Local historian Julian Pacyaan said the festival recognized the wine-making skills of Cordillerans.

"Each village in the Cordillera has its ingenious way of preparing the tapuy. This event is not only a tribute to the wine makers but to all the people of the Cordillera," Pacyaan said.

RP, Saudi draw closer to pact on drugs, terror

DAVAO CITY—The Philippines is moving closer to signing an anti-terror cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia, Philippine ambassador to Saudi, said Thursday.

Gaa made the statement on part, which could be signed before the year ends, in early months of the air bilateral agreements the Philippines was trying to [illegible] with the oil-rich Arab country that has been under increasing attack from terrorist groups.

"Two of the pending bilateral pacts that the country hopes to sign with Saudi Arabia before the end of the year involved cooperation in each, cultural cooperation (and) in fighting drugs and terror," Ombudsman Gaa representative Abdulmalik Al-Mujahid [illegible] during a business forum here attended by visiting Saudi leaders.

He said the country is looking forward to mutual benefits to [illegible] with Saudi Arabia in the wake of continuing threats from Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida group and its Southeast Asian link, the Jemaah Islamiyah.

"It is diligently working with both the [illegible] to save lives in the Philippines.

"We are stepping closer to forging security ties with Saudi Arabia in combating transnational crime, which include terrorism," Gaa stressed.

He said that the Philippines has recently joined the international conference on counter-terrorism in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, upon invitation by the Saudi [illegible].

"At the same time, the governments of Saudi Arabia and the Philippines are now harmonizing the draft agreements to fighting the trafficking of illegal drugs," he added.

The United States said terrorism and drugs are linked.

"We realize the benefits of working hand in hand to fight and prevent this vile menace; [illegible] sign of their overriding focus on [illegible] country," Gaa said. Carmelita A. Lacuesta, PNS Mindanao Bureau

NBI hunts cyber-terrorist based in C. De Oro

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is currently on the lookout for one of the world's most wanted cyber-terrorists, who is reported to be a student of Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro City.

The student is currently on the FBI's list due to his involvement in [illegible] on hacking software programs, including the online game MU, currently the second most popular online game in the Philippines.

Representatives of Nihilus Inc., the game's developers, filed a formal complaint against the student at the NBI office in Cagayan de Oro City.

The NBI also said that Internet cafes in Cagayan de Oro [illegible] the operating system servers that are [illegible] internet.

Lawyer Sabrina Belleza Jr., counsel for Nihilus, said in a press statement Monday that an arrest [illegible] as these [illegible] violations of the [illegible] rights.

ROUNDUP

Language school opens

PALI, Lanao del Sur—The provincial government of Lanao del Sur opened its school for the Philippine Language Center for Mindanao, a community-based Japanese language. For the first batch of 100 students interested in studying language/culture in Lanao or Japanese-born nationals interesting investment in Lanao or Japanese-born nationals, investment in their country. The Lanao del Sur Agricultural Language Learning Center project aims to equip college students, government and professionals the competitive edge in speaking fluently in Japanese. Gov. Lee Macarambon Jr. launched the project to improve the education of constituents and to [illegible] as an [illegible] area in information technology, engineering, architecture, nursing and computing.

Alan Alvarado Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Covenant for Sierra Madre

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—A group of environmentalists from the academe, local governments, private sectors, church and religious-based organizations signed a covenant to nurture and protect the Laguna portion of the Sierra Madre mountain range and declared [illegible] Barangays, municipalities and cities in Laguna.

The covenant was reached after a forum on Feb. 24 here. It was held to bring participants to consume major stakeholders by creating a platform, awareness, information and knowledge, identify problems and concerns, and mapping out strategies for the Laguna Sierra Madre Development Program. Dr. Virgilio T. Villacorta, manager of the Laguna Lake Management Office of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, said the forum was the [illegible] to the mountains in search of [illegible] and [illegible].

Ronnie C. Pinto, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mt. Banahaw bill

LUCENA CITY—Advocates for the creation of Mt. Banahaw and Mt. San Cristobal hoped to Congress on Feb. 28 to help conserve the nature. It aims to the Watershed help stop [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] the forests of Mt. Banahaw. [illegible] Representatives Rafael Rotor and Presidential Adviser Ruth Padilla [illegible] Banahaw Mt. San Cristobal Watershed Forest Reserve Bill. [illegible] Rotor and Padilla [illegible] Congress should still pass since that would make a potential ecosystem of an integrated protected area system.

Rubin T. Muller Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Whale sharks surface

BALUD, Sorsogon—Some 60 fishermen, beachgoers and tourists at the Pilar Beach in Balud here flocked to the shore to witness the night six whale sharks that surfaced to feed [illegible] waters at about 6:30 a.m. on Feb. 27. The whale sharks, about six [illegible] long, were trapped inside a fishing net. "The net was damaged as the whale sharks struggle to free itself," said fisherman John Bendoy, who heard the tourists after an hour. In the early hours, a whale shark, believed to be the one caught earlier by Mallari, was trapped inside a fish pen of Bonanza Corporation on Monday. "We first saw a whale when it immediately headed [illegible]

Job B. Rabor, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Reds apologetic

LUCENA CITY—The New People's Army apologized for the death of a three-year-old girl during an [illegible] on a military detachment of Infantry troops in Real on Monday. "We convey our sincere apology to the family of the victim. It was an unfortunate incident," [illegible] Ka Roger" Rodel Commercial Party of the Philippines spokesperson, said in a phone interview. He said the CPP had already ordered an investigation of the incident. "Commanders that were [illegible] proceedings will be [illegible] the concerned [illegible] team. They will be [illegible] disciplinary action," he said.

Rubin T. Muller Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

MEDICO BUILDING

(House of Medical & Dental Clinics)

Corner Lourdes & San Miguel Ave., Pasig City

TO OUR VALUED PATRONS AND PATIENTS

By virtue of the Writ of Preliminary Injunction issued by Branch 167, RTC, Pasig City

MEDICO IS OPEN

TO PROVIDE
CONTINUING ACCESSIBLE,
COMPETENT, COST-EFFICIENT
MEDICAL/DENTAL SERVICES

Our new Telephone Nos.:
622-1308; 633-6737; 633-3893

INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Nino A. Alvarado

No more rivers to cross for Manobo kids

By Gemelina Lacorte
Davao City

AT THE SIGHT of the new school building in Davao City, the 13-year-old Manobo-Matigsalog girl burst into tears.

Seeing friends overseas, in Invasive cebu, how years before, she had to hike up and down the mountain slopes, just to go to the nearest public school in another Marilog village, 3 kilometers away.

Sitio Kiahingansing, where the school is found, can be reached only through an arduous journey along hilling mountains and a flood prone river. This makes it very difficult for children of the Manobo-Matigsalog living near the boundaries of Davao and Bukidnon to go to school.

"When the rain comes, crossing the river was never that easy," says Nanang, who never got to finish Grade 1.

Now, the Australian Guided Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) project has put up a school learning center right at the heart of her own village. Nanang is among the 39 children who will start learning under the project's early childhood education curriculum.

Her classmates are a motley bunch of children aged 7 to 12 years old, she says.

On Saturdays and Sundays, adult people of the tribe will spend time to learn to read and write, and several new ways on how to earn a living.

"This learning center should change the children's lives," says Datu Jaime Andar-sudan to the Philippines Bush Pastor, the first foreign diplomat to visit the area.

LUMAD parents and their children during the inauguration of the Sitio Kiahingansing Elementary School in Gria Malisan in Marilog, Davao City.
www.eu.ca.gov

He calls the project "Australia's best — in the Philippines because it's about the future of the children."

BEAM follows the standard curriculum of the Department of Education (DepEd) but integrates the tribe's culture.

Medium of instruction

On the blackboard, one can read phrases like "mangin te magan," translated into English as "good afternoon," and even Filipino as "magandang hapon," along with the days of the week in Manobo-Matigsalog.

Jerry Reyes, a Manobo pastor and peacemaker in the functional literacy adult class, says the tribe's language is being used as medium of instruction so the children learn the basics of how to read and write.

Sitio Hakian sits on a hilly area that forms a basin in this part of forested Marilog, near the boundary of Davao and Bukidnon, home to a thousand Manobo-Matigsalog people. Only over a hundred of them live in Malisan.

It also road branches out of the paved Davao-Bukidnon highway and snakes through overhanging branches of bald, moss-covered trees.

Reyes recounts that when he first came to Malisan five years ago, one would never see a house made of G.I. sheets and plywood.

"They used to huddle together in very small huts made of cogon grass. There was no potable water for drinking, no electricity yet," he says. "Now, it's such a joy to find a school in our midst."

The one-room building put up by the tribe out of materials supplied by the project stands for people's hope in the future, says Dr. Dionisio Kadon, DepEd director for Southern Mindanao.

Six Manobos in Malisan, the structure will serve as venue for the children's early childhood program, and on weekends, for the functional literacy class for out-of-school youths and other tribe members still learning to read and write.

It will also be the center of cultural activities. But most of all, it will house some of the tribe's remaining artifacts.

Funded by some A$27.8 million (P1 billion) from the Australian government, BEAM is one of the foreign-assisted projects in Mindanao seeking to improve access to education of Moro and indigenous peoples.

"We're concentrating in areas where children have difficulties getting to mainstream schools," says D'Arcy Webb, Australian project director.

Second stage

BEAM's second stage seeks to address pressing educational issues, such as the impact of the conflict situation in the three regions, the construction of low-cost schools in mainstream, and low participation rates in Mindanao compared to other parts of the country.

Its Lumads Integrated Functional Education (LIFE) program is focused on indigenous peoples' communities, while a similar program, Providing Educational Services for Cultural Enhancement (PRACE), targets the island groups of Jolo and Tawi-Tawi.

Harnessing Opportunities for Muslim Education (HOME) projects are focused mainly on Muslim communities.

In Southern Mindanao alone, BEAM targets improving education access to 16 isolated Lumad and Muslim communities by putting up similar tribal schools to reach out to some 2,000 children.

Aside from Sitio Malisan in Marilog, the project includes three more barangays in Davao City, five more in Cotabato and Sarangani towns of Datu Odin Sinsuat, four in the towns of Maimbung, Maguindanao and Jolo, Cotabato and Sarangani towns of Datu Odin Sinsuat, four in the towns of Maimbung, Maguindanao and Jolo, Cotabato and Sarangani towns of Datu Odin Sinsuat, four in the towns of Lamitan, Maguindanao and Parang, Sulu in Cotabato City.

BEAM is also being rumored out in Central Mindanao and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, where the project is assisting 10 pilot madrasa (Islamic schools) to acquire DepEd accreditation.

After an end a half years, the project will soon be turned over to the DepEd and local governments.

For the first phase, the Australian government, poured in A$16.2 million (P525 million) for strengthening the project's administrative and management systems.

Another A$22.6 million (P775 million) was poured into the second phase, which started in June last year and will end in May 2008.

Aside from improving access of isolated communities to education, BEAM's second phase seeks to improve teachers' training and support indigenous materials development, among others, says Webb.

Through the BEAM, Lumad folk and Moro communities will have access not only to basic education, but also to livelihood opportunities, he says.

Convinced by the thought that she no longer have to cross rivers just to go to school, Nanang wipes her eyes. Her classmates join her. The dance of the tribe. The halfway's learning melody echoes through the whole place.

Sports proves the disabled can

Turn to page A17

Similarly, in volleyball, the ball was also tolled under the net, with the players following the movement of the ball from the clatter coming from objects inserted in the spherical.

Each team consisted of six players. Three totally blind players were seated on the ground near the net while their three other teammates—either partially blind or of low vision—stood behind them.

Like sighted players, they scrambled for the ball, rolling on the floor if necessary.

Teamwork, patience

The crowd cheered to encourage their foes, making hand signals and clapping their hands.

"You'd be surprised at their endurance. Because they're used to the game," Efren Amandoo, who was former orientation and mobility at PRO, said, beaming at the performances of her students.

Amandoo said the two events had been adapted for the visually impaired, on add to their physical fitness program.

The competition is also intended to train them on the values of sportsmanship, teamwork, and even patience.

Body language

Ping-pong and volleyball were added to another sport called goal ball, a game played by two teams of three players each, which has been part of the International Para-Olympics.

The game is played by rolling the ball from one end of the court to the other. The team which fails to stop the ball, which also has a rattle, loses the game.

The sportsfest did not lack the usual cheering contests, obstacle relays, modern dance competitions and calisthenics.

A spot sports show performed by three blind boys interpreted the sport in body language.

One more dance

The visually impaired girls carried pom-poms, which they used as a cue from their body leaders.

Twenty runners in mini-skirts, knee-high socks and midriff-s that showed off belly buttons hopped to be allowed to dance again even after they had already been declared winners in the modern dance competition.

"Ma'am, just one dance," one of the girls, in frantic sign language, implored Fred Edmilao Gumbing, principal of the Philippine School for the Deaf (PSD).

Shaping character

Capiendo said the sport's festival was important in molding the character-s of those with disabilities.

"Values have to be taught consciously through actions and actual practices," Capiendo said.

He said that without experiences—teamwork, honesty and patience—which are important in sports—these values would remain "abstract in the minds of the impaired."

The special Olympics was started in 1968 upon the sponsorship of the Knights in Columbus in Pasay City.

The Themasites

This year, the festival included participants from the Hajimong Mini Kapisanan Foundation and the Pasay City Special Education Center at the Jose Rizal Elementary School.

The sports festival began with special athletes from the Philippine School for the Deaf and Blind, the first school for the disabled in Asia, which was established in 1907 by the Themasites.

The Themasites were a group of American public school teachers who arrived in the Philippines in 1900 and established the public school system in the country.

School splits in two

The school, however, was split in two—a separate school for the deaf and another school for the blind—to give the disabled some dignity, according to Capiendo.

"It had seemed that the deaf was also blind, but that is not the case. Sometimes, one is deaf, but not necessarily blind. And the blind are not necessarily deaf," Capiendo said.

THE PHYSICALLY challenged enjoy the sportsfest specially staged for the handicapped in the Cuneta Astrodome. Participants include the Filipinong mag Kapisanan Foundation. This special olympics started in 1981 sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. MAY CUDIAL

Songs kept hope alive at Barracks 19

Turn to page A17

60th anniversary of the liberation of Los Baños from Japanese forces.

"The young Aussies were the entertainers of Barracks City. They composed about 24 songs while we were here. So those last days, we had this one..." he said before launching into the song.

"Barracks City" was actually Barracks 19, where private, duty and noncommissioned officers were kept

Maxi take in Minimi deal

Front page A1

of land at the Fontes Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio.

On March 16, 2000, the Armed Forces received 402 Minimis from Belgian Fabrique Nationale Herstal Herstal (FNH), costing a total of $711.7 4 million.

The guns were priced at $5,000.20 each.

The contract was made their local public debut in March 2001 in a parade marking the 106th anniversary of the Army.

Concurrently, FNH sold 3,079 Minimi units to the US government for $8.3 million, or $2,461.58 per unit.

Based on documents obtained by the INQUIRER, this would suggest that the AFP Minimi were costlier by $2,567.70 each, or by as much as $100,311.28 per unit, at the exchange rate of P50 to a dollar.

"The Philippines is a victim of corporate greed," the Internet source alleged.

He added: "The foreign affairs office should demand from FNH a refund of P60 million."

No overprice

Maj. Gen. Reynaldo Rivera, deputy chief of staff for Capabilities, Materiel and Technology Development (J7) and chair of the AFP Modernization Program Management Office, said the purchase was more expensive because it also included accessories, such as spare barrels, cleaning kits, cases and technical manual.

"The J7 bought a basic system. The AFP purchased the Minimi with accessories, which explains the difference in the price," Rivera said in a telephone interview.

Randy Lindayo, FNH representative in the Philippines, backed Rivera's statement.

Best deal

A long-time military supplier, Lindayo said FNH offered the "most cost-effective" deal, which included counterbids and bidding rounds during the negotiation process.

"We have been supplying the Philippine Army for a long time and we know what they want," he said.

Lindayo also said the Minimi was "a good weapon but less efficient because we are using inferior ammunition."

A Minimi colonel said the AFP also had to contend with other problems, such as the poor quality of bullets and the ejected magazines from the Minimi was "dual fed," meaning it could be fired using the standard 30-type magazine or by using the more costly 100-round magazine. Some also could not feed or packaged in 200-round boxes or 100-round soft pouches.

The middle finger on each of the gadgets that serves to link a series of bullets in form a belt, so the handcuffs that soldiers sling across their chests when they go on operations.

Rivera also said that "reasonable," like ammunition and metallic links, could not be purchased under the modernization program, which stipulates that modernization funds would be used exclusively to buy brand-new equipment or upgrade old ones.

What, he said, bullets for the Minimi had to be procured through the usual AFP procurement system.

Same winning bidder

Limjoco said there were problems with ammunition and metallic links, but these had been remedied.

In April 2000, a month after the 402 Minimi units were delivered, Limjoco said he wrote then Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya about the ammunition.

"I told them, 'hey guys, you need ammo'," Limjoco said.

THE WILL. DAUNTED soldiers never go out on patrol without it—a belt-full of bullets or handcuffs.

IN THE KNOW

Easy to use

THE 5.56MM (NATO) M249 was developed by Belgium's Fabrique Nationale de Herstal and first assembled in 1974. The FN Minimi is favored by many nations, by its ease to use and clean. This weapon is known as the FN Minimi in Europe, M249 in the US, and the C0 in Canada.

Manufacturer: Fabrique Nationale Herstal

Country: Belgium

Description: Squad automatic weapon

Operation: Gas-operated, air-cooling belt

Rate of fire: 750-1,000 rounds per minute

Caliber: 5.56 mm

Type: Light machine gun

Length: 1,040 mm

Weight: 7.1 kg

Barrel: 465 mm

Feed system: 200-rounds belt or 30-rounds M16 style magazine

Sights: Adjustable iron sight

Safety: Two-position automatic safety

SOURCE: GLOBAL SECURITY.ORG, FABRIQUE NATIONALE HERSTAL

The Army wanted the bidding process only in June 2002, according to Limjoco, who also emerged as the winning bidder. He said he delivered one million rounds of ammunition in June 2000.

Limjoco said the bullets and links came from FMH but from Australia, Philippines, which he also represents.

Spread all around

"You see, that is the advantage with the Minimi. We can source from other companies. There is no monopoly," he said.

The problem of ammunition would be addressed permanently once the government-owned arsenal starts to manufacture the 5.56 ammo for the Minimi, under a technology transfer scheme with FMH, Limjoco said.

FMH has started conducting training for Minimi armorers and operators.

But as early as June 2001, with the ammunition problem still unsolved, top FMH executives began making courtesy calls on Armed Forces and other AFP top brass for the follow-on Minimi 2 purchase of an additional 1,700 Minimi units.

On March 23, 2004, Rivera wrote Tony Andrews, FN Herstal Regional Director for Southeast Asia, for a quotation.

The AFP wanted to ask to those to be used for bidding," Rivera told the bureau.

Also, Rivera said the FMH had agreed to sell the M249 Minimi at the 2001 price of $5,000.20.

On July 23, Rivera, as head of the negotiating team, signed a contract for Minimi units amounting to P593.3 million.

Friendship contract!

Rivera signed the contract on Sept. 6, and the documents were forwarded to the defense department, where it is undergoing review by lawyers.

What does it take to win a contract? Its sets of public relations or philanthropy in other things, help?

Sources said Limjoco enjoys the friendship of President Macapagal-Arroyo because his parents, Fernan and Helen Limjoco, were close friends of Mr. Arroyo's parents.

Fernan Limjoco chose evaluator, the two-star rank, also went to school with Mr. Arroyo at the Ateneo de Manila.

The Limjocos, according to others sources, also came from the good graces of former President Joseph Estrada, who donated medical equipment to Lt. Rolen de Guzman's charity programs.

In November 1999, Mr. Limjoco donated a dialysis machine just three months after Mr. Estrada requested for a unit. A year later, the family also donated medical equipment to the AFP Medical Center.

Interest in the Minimi was partly fueled by Estrada's release of P5.4 billion for the AFP modernization program.

From Reyes to Abaya

From a chronology prepared by Limjoco, the Minimi controversy would seem to ripple a tremendous that passes through the hands of officials as they climb up the AFP linear city.

According to the document, the AFP expressed renewed interest to the Minimi weapon system during the term of then Armed Forces chief of staff in 2000. The first bid, lying was held in September 2001, with Limjoco's company submitting documents and Brig. Gen. Ismael Rosa as vice chair.

In May 2002, Reyes, already defense secretary, ordered Chief of Staff Gen. Roy Cimatu to "cancel the matter of award" to FN Herstal, according to the documents.

The first 402 Minimi units were delivered in March 2001 when Reyes was still defense secretary.

In June 2000, Limjoco began negotiating for the additional 1,700 Minimi units. By this time, Abaya had assumed the chief of staff post. Abaya would approve the second contract for Minimi in September 2004.

These additional Minimi were also ordered for the Army which Senga is now commanding.

Tiny video watches give Israel deadly edge

Front page A1

to see for nearly a year in the Israeli military's attack helicopters, helping pilots identify and strike Palestinian militants within seconds.

The technology, which is also used by police and in security vehicles, was a closely guarded secret until the company that developed a refined reporters a rare glimpse at the system this week.

"We are building the sensor fusion system that we see," said Ehud Shabtai, president of the Elbit Group's Tadiran Electronic Systems and Tadiran Spectralink companies.

Beni said the communications system has "shortened tremendously" the amount of time it takes to identify and strike a target.

"Before, it was minutes. 20 to 12 minutes. Now it's a matter of seconds," he said.

Israel agreed to halt its policy of "targeted killings" of Palestinian militant leaders earlier on its Israeli unveiled declared last month by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas.

But after a Palestinian suicide bomber killed two Israelis last week, Israel said it would resume its assassination practice.

No comment

The Israeli Army declined to comment about the new technology. Tadiran Electronic Systems acknowledged they can launch air strikes or certify that targeted militants no longer have time to live, in contrast to the early days of fighting in late 2000. They cite improvements in the system's arsenal, not any single technology.

The screen being field-tested by a limited number of Israeli officers is about 3 inches wide, and

WRIST monitor allows soldiers in the field to see armored vehicles and the video captured by unmanned aircraft.

weighs just a few ounces. Code-named Whistler, it's attached to the wrist by a velcro strap.

The LCD screens display color video that is beamed directly from drones in real time at 30 frames per second—the same rate as broadcast TV.

Attack helicopters have been fitted with first-look cameras. The "Video Receiver" systems also include aural reception units that can transmit to the helicopter's helicopter or carried in additional ways.

No just a novelty

The new technology is considered much more than a novelty.

Military experts have bemoaned, by Israel since the early 1990s, the until recently, the information that they gathered was sent to a ground command center that interpreted it and then shared it with troops in the field. The Tadiran systems allow the soldiers themselves to receive information remotely by the various forces, company officials said.

The device are still controlled by a ground command center, but the visitors have been the ability to switch over the camera to meet their specific needs.

This real-time information has enabled Israel's conflict its ability to attack from the sky. During more than two years of fighting with the Palestinians, Israeli helicopters or other have killed dozens of militants.

The system can also greatly reduce casualties by allowing troops "to see everything that is behind the hill and around the corner," Beni said. In built-up areas, the company said the improved information can help troops minimize civilian casualties in the crowded refugee camps and city streets where Israeli troops and Palestinian militants often clash.

Joystick warfare

Tadiran only recently received clearance to show the system to the public. It plans to unveil the system formally next week at a fair in Paris that includes products and "low intensity" conflict.

The company also developed a system resembling a video game that allows soldiers to control unmanned ground vehicles. The system is similar to a small flat screen and two joysticks, one on each side. One joystick controls the vehicle, while the other controls the items on the exhibit, such as its cameras.

The computer screen shows what the vehicle is seeing, including video footage from drones and detailed maps of the battlefield.

The technology is expected to be part of the "Gladiator" unmanned ground robotics being developed by the US Marines. The company is a member of the Gladiator consortia, which includes partners Carnegie Mellon University and Israel Defense Industries Inc., for instance. AP

ALI-I-ILISSIANG. Boy Negro was a man of his words.

Boy Negro, Bicolana wife 'met' thru text messaging

Front page A6

Ladies but somehow had the impression that he was a bachelor.

She met her future husband—whom police call "Boy Negro"—after one month of exchanging text messages with him starting January 2002.

After another two months, she accepted his proposal to marry him in Manila's Ilitia.

Today, Ilitia's would has been turned upside down.

Introduction

The man she had come to love is in police custody, accused of being a member of the Abu Sayyaf and of involvement in the kidnap-for-ransom of 20 people, including three Americans, from Dos Palmas resort in Palawan province in May 2001.

Boy Negro's would has been turned upside down.

Introduction

The man she had come to love is in police custody, accused of being a member of the Abu Sayyaf and of involvement in the kidnap-for-ransom of 20 people, including three Americans, from Dos Palmas resort in Palawan province in May 2001.

Ilitia's would has been turned upside down.

Ilitia, 26, is a graduate of Bicol University in Legazpi City and a former employee of the Department of Agriculture in Bicol.

She met Boy Negro, who is also known as Ali-I-Ilissiang, through a text message sent to her cellular phone by a friend of a friend.

Boy Negro, who was then working in Saudi Arabia, introduced himself as Ted Ilitia.

Ilitia said she responded because Boy Negro's message was "interesting."

"He was a stranger, but I felt I could trust him," she said.

Ilitia said she was impressed by Boy Negro's "good manners" and his "good command of the English language."

Ilitia said she had no idea that Boy Negro was a Muslim.

"He never mentioned his religion," she said.

METRO
Editor Ester G. Diposcupil ■ Assistant Editor Conan G. Bilou Jr.

EZ2: 25 28 | SUERTRES: 4 6 1 | SIX DIGIT: 3 9 8 7 5 6 | 6/42 Lucky Vis-Min: 13 19 27 28 29 33 ₱11,161,445.40 | SWEEPSTAKES: 4 3 5 4 3 1 7 ₱100,000.00

Text us your feedback: (capital from metro@inq7.net (Globe) or 183 (Smart))

Judge jumps into trial of Tan tax case

Magistrate dispenses with pre-trial procedures to start hearings Friday

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

AFTER more than a decade, the P20-billion tax evasion case against one of the country's richest men is finally going to trial.

Manila's Metropolitan Trial Court Judge Meri Rizal on Friday set the week as the first trial day for the case against tobacco and beer tycoon Lucio Tan.

The judge has terminated the pre-trial proceedings that had been marked by debates about the pre-marking of about a truckload of documentary evidence.

Pre-marking was routine mandated after the defense asked the court to follow a recent Supreme Court precedent. Traditionally, evidence may marked as the trial progressed.

But Rizal decided on Friday to go back to the old way as he ordered that exhibits of documents "shall no longer be offered to the Branch Clerk of Court for marking but shall be marked in the course of the (trial)."

He said he believed that "both parties are interested in the speedy trial of these cases."

State Prosecutor Edna Sakro-cacho said she considered the order in her advantageous to the prosecution.

No objection

Throughout did not object to the order, defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza told reporters they would wait and see "how expeditious the proceedings (would be)."

Mendoza, who was defended former President Joseph Estrada in his impeachment trial, said the SC has recommended the pre-marking of evidence to speed up trials.

"Perhaps we would have already recited by the time this case is resolved," Mendoza said in Filipino.

Based on the defense's comment, the prosecution will present at least 51,431 documents and other evidence.

During deliberations on how pre-marking would be done, prosecutors proposed that it be done once a week. It supposedly befall that the procedure would be finished in ten months.

The defense disagreed, however saying that with that pace, pre-marking would take three years.

To end the debate, the judge decided to judge mark the exhibits in those are presented during the course of the trial.

The government started the case against Tan in 1995.

On March 22, 1999, State, who was hearing the case, dismissed it with finality and later turned down the government's motion for reconsideration.

On July 11 last year, the SC reversed the dismissal and ordered the Manila court to reopen the case.

During his arraignment on Jan. 7, Tan pleaded not guilty to charges that he and officers of his former Tobacco Corporation used nine "dummy" marketing companies to avoid paying P23.4-billion in taxes between 1990 and 1992.

Fire gobbles up hardware store, 4 houses in Makati

FIREMEN in a silhouetted against Makati's night sky, lit up by flames consuming a hardware store and a cluster of houses in Barangay Sto. Cristo

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE BLAZING after a fire razed Nenita Perez's home, she could only gaze in disbelief at the blue pant, white remained of her home's frame.

"It has been our home for the past 34 years," she said tearfully, oblivious of passengers ogling through the burnt remnants.

The fire that destroyed Perez's house and three other residences on Makatea Street, Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Makati City, the other night started at a hardware store at 11:8 blind thirteen at 11:48 p.m. The fire was put out at 12:39 a.m. yesterday.

The store, owned by a certain Isabel Chua, was just behind Perez's house.

Cause yet unknown

Makati fire investigators do not know yet what caused the fire. The hardware store was empty at the time; FO2 Wilfredo Marfil told the bureau yesterday.

The store's security guard could not even get much because it was locked, added Marfil.

When the guard saw the blaze, which started at the middle of the store, he ran to the Sanlay Bayan station a few meters away, Marfil said.

Men and lumber inside the store caused the fire to spread quickly, he added.

A neighbor told the bureau that the store's stuff was made of wood, causing the fire to spread to nearby houses that were also made of light and flammable materials.

P3M in damage

Three houses suffered minor injuries and damage was placed at P3 million.

Firemen recovered from the scene P50,000 in cash, a .38-caliber pistol and some pieces of jewelry which were handed over to the store owner's son.

Perez's family was left only with a computer, piano and rare television sets. All their clothes were burned.

Jun Quito, another fire victim, managed to save his children's clothes, a refrigerator and a TV set. He and his family will live temporarily at his uncle's house in Mandaluyong.

But Perez has no one to whom to left of her home. "I have no choice. I have three kids, two of them are still studying," she said.

'Worm' threatens computers

By Tina G. Santos

A NATIONAL forum of law-enforcement officials has warned Internet users against a mass 'worm' spreading in cyberspace.

Photos are programs that computer-literate hackers from computers to systems without the use of a host file. This is in contrast to viruses, which require the spreading of an infected host file.

The variant "Bagle@61.3" is a Trojan horse, a file that contains a malicious code that when triggered would cause the loss, or even theft, of data. It can damage antivirus programs, the NBI assistant said.

"It will try to turn off your antivirus or firewall program, thus rendering you vulnerable even to other viruses," the official from the NBI's Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division said.

But the source was quick to add that the worm can be prevented from infecting computers by careful handling of e-mail, especially those from strangers.

Atienza raises alarm over summer diseases

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza has directed the city health department to monitor the spread of diseases that usually accompany the summer months.

He said that based on experience, cases of sore eyes, influenza, measles, chickenpox and diarrhea rise during summer. But City Hall has yet to release statistics on these diseases.

"The key to keeping cases of such diseases to minimum levels is monitoring and prevention," Atienza said.

He ordered residents to immediately seek treatment if they exhibit symptoms of such diseases.

In line with this, city health officer Dr. Lorenzo Sandoval said they had stepped up information dissemination, particularly measures to prevent contracting the diseases.

She said handwashing topped the list. Tina G. Santos

Cabbies used to distribute counterfeit bills

By Luigi A. del Puerto

POLICE said they had busted the distribution arm of a group that had "almost perfected" the printing of fake P500 bills.

The group said counterfeit P500, P200 and P50 bills mainly to taxi drivers, according to Supt. Wilfredo Mercurio, chief of the Northern Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

"The group has almost perfected the printing of fake P500 bills," Mercurio said. Only very close and careful scrutiny revealed the bills were fake.

The CIDG arrested on Thursday in Barangay Bisig in Valenzuela City Tony Espeleta, 43, and Adrianito Rodolfo, 50.

The suspects, who were presented to the media in Camp Crame yesterday, reportedly yielded 40 pieces of counterfeit P500, 45 fake P50 and 20 fake P200 bills when nabbed.

The fake P500 bills had security marks and the security printing signs of sophisticated printing.

"From the quality of paper used is very good," said National Capital Region CIDG deputy chief Supt. Manuel Pinero.

"But the number 500 is the security mark is a little obvious, unlike those in a real bill that are almost imperceptible," Pinero said.

Espeleta and Rodolfo did not give the bills directly to the police said. The fake bills were only brought to Espeleta's home.

One of the suspects got away, Mercurio said.

Police said Espeleta and Rodolfo were distributors of a group that had expanded its operations to Cavite and Laguna.

The two suspects told the bureau that a P500 bill was sold for P150 to P600, a P200 bill for P75 to P100 and a P50 bill, P25 to P25.

Police said the group sold counterfeit bills to taxi drivers, who would pass them for real money from unwary passengers.

Mercurio said, "If a passenger gives (a taxi driver) a P500 bill, [the] would put it, replace it with a counterfeit, which he gives to the passenger, saying he does not have change."

Water 'jeepney' plies the highs and lows of Pasig River

By Margaux C. Ortiz

FOR HALF a century his boats linked up two cities, with his longtime livelihood having passengers from Makati to Mandaluyong and back again.

Now Santiago, 81, has seen the one river a thousand times over his beloved Pasig River since he inherited the ferry boat business from his parents in late 40 years ago.

Witness to change

He has also witnessed the river's transformation from a pristine, wonder-land celebrated by countless Filipino poets, into a smelly, dying body of water, the latest of a growing metropolis.

But Santiago is not dismayed. In fact, he wants his children and his children's children to continue the business.

"I have always had an affinity with rivers," said Santiago, citing once a makeshift collection booth by the river.

A native of Bulacan, Santiago said he had wanted to join the Navy when he was younger. But marriage at the age of 16 to a girl from the other side of the river prompted him to abandon the dream.

His 17-year-old wife's parents then planned on their forty boat business, started in 1948, in the young couple.

The young ferry boat operator quickly learned how to run the business, buying a new boat that was more passenger-friendly and taking charge of fare collection.

In 1961, when he inherited the business, Santiago's family got the right to operate four lines of ferry services through a public bidding conducted by Makati and Mandaluyong.

For P2,000, Santiago and his relatives were allowed to operate from Nelgata, Hulo, Buwayang Bato and Buendia in Makati City.

Load-and-go ride

"Our boatmen back then had to row oars to ferry the passengers in 10-meter boats," Santiago said, adding that the fare then was only five centavos. A total of 150 passengers daily earned Santiago P14 a week.

The oars were abandoned as the boats were outfitted with motors in 1965.

Santiago said the number of passengers crossing the river exploded increased dramatically over the years, from a few hundreds in the 1960s to thousands in the late 1990s.

"We now charge P2.50 per passenger, almost the same amount we used to earn daily in the early days," Santiago said with an amused smile.

He added that their income almost in P500 per day excluding expenses for gasoline, maintenance, and the two boatmen's salaries.

The four business, Santiago said, supplemented his salary as a government worker and helped put four children through college.

"Aside from earning money, I also tell my children that this is our way of serving the community," he said with a hint of pride.

Because most of his people work in the other areas in Makati's Central Business District, we often see men and women dressed to the nines using bench or floaty rafts," Santiago said. The Pasig River had its own "rush hour"—7:30 to 9 a.m. and 5 to 7 p.m.

Not worried

Santiago said he was not worried about the impending revival of the Pasig River ferry service to that end.

"The ferry service brings passengers from one section of the same side of the river to another, but some across," Santiago pointed out.

He added with a grin, "This business has been outlasted the Pasig River's transformation."

Santiago said when he was younger, the river was so clear that women bathed fully clothed "to avoid peeping toms."

"Now the only things left to

BOATMAN Jose Santiago has seen the Pasig River change through the years and has lost and thousands across the once fabled waterway

this dying river are painful but sad one ferry boat," he said with a smile.

"This only shows that we are here to stay."

E-mail pi_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Focus is Cielo Magno Quiroga-Kapunan

Sunday BIZ

AMANDO TETANGCO JR.

BSP welcomes straight, sharp shooter

TETANGCO is no athlete but in the shooting event.

By Carlos S. Bedes

A LOT of what Amando "Dap" M. Tetangco Jr. says during his interviews tells very little about what he is thinking (how does one read between the lines when the press is not swinging like Tarzan and Jane's are at their best behavior).

Tetangco, who will replace Rafael Buenaventura as BSP Governor, is the perfect go-to guy at the BSP especially when the economy is acting up.

Few persons have the skills and experience to handle the CEO job that he will inevitably assume in July.

In spite this, however, reporters avoid quizzing this official, as he rarely panders to the morning sports departments.

Say [words] like right simply refuses to fall out any time that could lead him to someone's banner stories.

When you ask him why the peso-level dropped, for instance, he would often say: "The local currency is vulnerable because of month-end corporate demand supplemented by expected remittances."

But outside the BSP's fat-cushioning central bank chief, who rose from the ranks and holds down the administration's favorite province of Pampanga, is pure no-nonsense cool dude who enjoys a night of wine, good food and casual banter.

The conversation need not always be of the intellectual variety.

Say has a deadpan humor; he laughs heartily at ridiculous jokes.

He calls his closest friends "pards," as if they were still the late '70s, and refuses after his first glass of Shiraz or Merlot.

It was during one of those unintended moments that he talked about being a member of the BSP Golf Club.

Yup, the deputy governor who can't seem to take risks with his press statements, actually enjoys—no, pales—the adrenaline of going for the kill. No kidding. He is actually head over heels about it.

Even true, one of his "pards" who now sits at the country's national treasury, guarantees that he is a sharp shooter.

"I've seen him in action. He is really good," says Jesse.

Suffice it to say that runaway speculation about inevitable depreciation scattered, even if Say claims he is not as fit as he has been, edged by losing to some employees from competitors.

Say says his new swing has the ratio running his club 4:1 on the target. But during the early '90s, he was shooting near a mark, sometimes twice.

Now, he is just an adviser to the golf club. But he still manages to swap to the pro range once in a while.

His last game was in November.

From the shooting range, it is now the fairways that he goes to decompress between.

He is there not merely out of need to see real friends with other golfers, but also because he enjoys golf, as much as he enjoys shooting.

"The satisfaction I get from shooting is different from golf. In shooting, there is no room for error. It requires speed, accuracy and precision," he notes, as if he is talking about addressing monetary volatility.

But he doesn't want to compare his hobby and his job, although he says that shooting gives him a chance to bond with colleagues in the BSP.

The club, after all, has more than 100 members, mostly guests of the BSP.

"Every shooting game is an event for fellowship," he notes.

Like golf, shooting has drifted into women, notwithstanding.

There is the OPA, or clay pigeon' trade, and open field courses ranging from 10 yards to 50 yards.

There are also courses with "poppers," referring to the mechanical pistols loads of pool.

Say says his firearm is modified to allow him to shoot using either hand, although the right is his stronger arm.

Shooting, like golf, is not without luck.

The firearm itself is expensive, ranging anywhere from P50,000 to P1,000,000. Ammunition is not cheap. The glory and excitement are just as pricey.

Does he bring a gun to the car since he has no bodyguard? Has he ever fired a gun outside the range?

These are questions, according to Say, that should not even be asked.

Can he stand having several more years of this scrutiny?

Right now he can't let his driver, Leo, who is also known to be a bad golfer.

Again, he just smiled in reply.

But he will still have to answer it one way or another as starting July, Say will not just be the deputy governor in charge of the BSP economic research.

He will not just be making those "mental notes" side to inside lined with bands in the cookie jar.

By July he will be the guy who signs everything that will be responsible for everything that happens in the banking sector, even the collapse of the smallest bank in the country.

It is a weighty, in-your-face issue, but in considering what he has to do, Tetangco just asked for one favor from the organizers: Make sure that every shot for a symbol, his name ends with a .ph.

It was, his namesake, a notary public in Quezon City, will be one "hella—er, so hella—ups."

THE NEW Governor of BSP says shooting gives him a chance to bond with colleagues

Take just half the clothes, twice the needed money

By Sandra Garcia
Contributor

I JUST got back from a business trip with two colleagues. Since we were going to be away only just a few days, we all traveled "light" to our destination.

While there, we, unfortunately, got invited away to our numerous business meetings and collected literature and other relevant materials at each and every stop which we eventually requested when we started packing to our hotel.

EXECUTIVE TRAVEL

Our first stop was to Hong Kong. We had left days for good measure. That, we didn't have a chance to touch our to do some shopping. Besides, it was our last day but after we'd to our last few days.

We made a mad dash for every shopping mall on sight and yes, shopped till we dropped. Then it was time to pack.

We left the hotel with overstuffed luggage and an empty of any money on our cards.

An hour before departure, we were jumping from one traveller to another to get to our departure gate. Gate 52.

It took us almost 20 minutes to negotiate the long distance (from immigration to Gate 52, where we made a pit stop.

After relieving ourselves and our us we to our last travelator ride to our departure gate, we witnessed a 'Pinoy freak out' when an airline staff informed him about the departure gate change from Gate 52 to Gate 13.

Satan, my colleague, and I looked at each other and freaked as it was 10 minutes to departure time.

We were like rambler wannabes jumping from one travelator to another to make it to our new departure gate.

With a plastic bag carrying 12 bags of assorted and duty-free bags that weighed 600 grams each in our hand, and a laptop computer on the other, I was short of breath as we raced through two flights of escalators to get to Gate 13.

It gets worse. My sister and by 10 mega pixels that, had us in a bus, to take us to our plane! I was near collapse (with my heavy cargo and all I had to do) by crowded bus.

I was becoming desperate as I situated the mad scrap to the plane and swore to myself, as the hanging backpack of the heavy across of me hit my face every step of the way, to get the entire crew hell if they gave me a hard time (the efficiency and friendliness of Manila, our airline attendants assigned to our section saved time from my woes).

I decided here knows better understand light. When traveling, you also need to consider the following:

- Follow the Golden Rule of traveling: Pack lightly.
- Check out the weather at destinations on CNN the night before you travel. I did and found out that the temperature in our destination was 10 degrees Celsius. I like to put on a sweater to pack light, warm clothing!.
- Lay your clothes and other items on your bed before you pack so you can choose only the ones that are your entire closet; you should bring along.
- Pick a classy, neutral-colored blazer just in case you need to go to an unexpected formal occasion.
- Shoes, belts and bags should be neutral enough to go day to night and match easily with various pants, skirts, dresses or trousers.
- Pack toiletries in small or mini sizes.
- Pack pairs of socks made of synthetic cross like acrylic so they keep your feet dry and comfortable.
- Consider bringing along a light, strong nylon bag for your duty laundry.
- Use combination locks, rather than the keyed variety for your luggage.

Learn from my recent experience, make sure your carry-on luggage is not too heavy. You need to go through tight departure gate changes at a gigantic airport.

- Bring a bottle of water with you.
- When you make your hotel reservations make sure you specify you smoking floor if you're a non-smoker.

Lastly, follow the travelers' motto: "Take half as many clothes and twice as much money." For your own travel tips/recipes or feedback, please e-mail sbg1402@yahoo.com

FRAN. COM., INC.
FRANCHISE AND MARKETING CONSULTANCY
SINCE 1996
(632) 8309 • 831-2378 • 637-2393

KING JAMES AUCTION
"Let there 'Bloom Boom'"
We Buy or Accept Consignment
HOUSEHOLD & DEPARTMENT FURNITURE, FIXTURES, EQUIPMENTS, VEHICLES, STORE INVENTORIES, HANDBAGS, PENS, CLOTHING, RESTAURANT & HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT, HOTEL FURNISHING, INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES & BANK REPOS

FLAP A banner for food and table settings

Connubial blitz

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

COUPLES' chances of tossing their marriage into a success may have become increasingly slim. But this has not prevented Filipinos from splurging on lavish weddings.

Indeed, putting up a grand wedding show involves so many players, and thousands of pesos in expenses, that it has emerged as an industry worth reckoning.

Marina Pelaez of Pronto and Mirth, organizer of the Wedding Expo Philippines, tells Sunday Biz that the wedding industry came in to being about 20 years ago, due partly to exposure to trends abroad that resulted to couples and the trimmings, rather than the ceremony.

Continue that with the Filipinos' flair for romance and an industry is born, with couples trying to put on a better event than the previous wedding they attended—at least as much as their budgets and creativity will allow.

"This is a kind of industry that continues to grow even with a negative economy because people still spend their savings on a nice and memorable wedding," Pelaez says.

The bulk of the wedding expense typically goes to the food, and this segment will for sure grow on to YEAR.

YEAR head Buddy Abesamis says the company used to concentrate in office canteens and small catering services. But when many offices cut down on their budget for food, they were left with no option but to look for other markets. Catering for weddings became the company's bread-and-butter.

"When we started a few years ago, our aim was to be happy if we did just two weddings in a month," Abesamis says. "Now we are doing as many as 40. The industry has really grown bigger."

Robert Mercado, the creative force behind Alfredo Rivera and Ernel Bolong, tells their nuptials are now more sophisticated in their taste that they are no longer content with the basic arrangements of old.

"That is why we call it event styling," Mercado says.

Hotel ballrooms, for instance, are transformed into indoor gardens with the right mix and design of flowers and greenery. Garden events are made even more magical and elsewhere have also become a night out of a lavish magnitude.

Mercado adds that opportunities are not limited to Manila. Even the provinces are catching up on the trends, as couples from the city choose to hold their wedding in places closer to nature.

Watching photography has likewise evolved through the years, and the pricing along with it. Packages offered by top-class wedding photographers now come as lean the figures.

Rio Tuason, who was named 2004 Photographer of the Year of the Wedding Photographers and Portrait Photographers Association of the Philippines, says there is now a preference for photos with a photojournalistic unfocused.

The name on couples

A WINNING Tuason shot

BLANCAFLOR brings flower arranging to a new level

ANIMO LA SALLE!
FAST TRACK YOUR CAREER WITH LASALLIANS LOOKING OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER

JOIN US..!
Attention: To All Medical Practitioners...
Sales & Marketing Professionals
EARN Php 700,000
In just One Shot Deal.....!
This 2005 might be your Lucky Year.! Come and be our
BUSINESS PARTNERS...!
Expand your Network...!
TRUST the Quality and Service of our company.
HIMEX – the leader in providing State-of-the-art HITACHI Medical equipments - MRI, CT-scanners, Ultrasound, and X-ray Systems.
Come and let's talk business, starting March 7 until March 14; from 8am to 5pm, look for Mr. RAD LEMETA.
HIMEX CORP.
Units 602, 604 & 606 Prestige Tower, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Complex, Pasig City
Tel: 632-7637 to 38; 632-7644
Visit our website: www.ehimex.com

RP launches own spa brand

By Carrie Salmorse Maitem

THE TRIAD from the Thai massage, the Indonesian, then Balinese spa.

Filipinos, however, have been unwittingly becoming the continent's messages since spas started gaining popularity in Asia.

In many cases, these borrowed concepts took root even more in the striking points of our very own spa menu boards.

While there was nothing wrong with Filipinos doing Thai or Swedish massage on spa-goers, or in offering the Balinese brand coconuts and foreign tourists in our resorts, people in the Philippines (hasty) still sensed that something was simply not right.

Marjorie Lumagui, a pioneer in the spa trade in the country and president of SHY Corp., Japanese of several spas in Manila, was among the first to make this realization.

"We have been doing it as well, we have our own traditional massage to boast, the warmth of our people, and all the resources of the archipelago, and still the westernized offerings reigned supreme. It is why spa effect can swell" says Marjorie.

The establishment of standard-setter industry players and the department of tourism to come up with the country's own spa category showcases the best in Philippine-flavored massage and skill...and the Philippines' indigenous resources.

Thus, the "Filipino Brand of Spa," which is prominently features "Hilot" (the traditional Filipino healing) massage or touch down, is coming to being.

"There is no more powerful, more satisfying class, having our own brand that has emotional relate and that appeals to all senses," says Marjorie.

"There is even invented to take us into a smile or turned a beholding to make this possible," says Marjorie, "we need to do is to be willing to be ourselves, to make full use of our raw resources, hone the right packaging and be ambitious do it."

Three months are when the world will see where the "Filipino Brand of Spa" will be. It will be internationally by the DOT and the one-week Philippine International Spa Day.

The Philippines' own spa brand will be underpinned, the "Hilot" or therapeutic massage, the one during the International Spa Association Expo Asia Pacific Conference and Exhibition 2005 on May 3 to 7, which adopts the theme, "Uniquely Asia."

Catching up

"Before a massage client is nothing but a massage client. To-day, spa offer a total experience and the customer wants more than a soaring and happy people like the Filipinos can provide," Marjorie says.

The trend spa must have come from Spain, a small town in Philippines known for its natural mineral springs that attracted people to flock and bathe in the healing waters, or from the Latin phrase *salus per aquam*, which literally means health from water. But, she says, it can also vary such as "special personalized spa-goods" to meet the individual spa goer's needs and to make him feel better.

The "Filipino Brand of Spa" was conceived as part of the DOT's programs to develop and promote health tourism in the country. The department said the spa industry agreed that the way to pursue the objective was through the traditional massage, the Hilot.

"I believe we can really catch up to this trade with our neighbors and the rest of the world by highlighting the therapeutic benefits of our hand, skill, beauty, relaxation and pampering at home," Marjorie exhibits. "After all, our's health is not negotiable. Its value cannot be measured."

The "Hilot" is expected to give direction to the country's health tourism program and distinguish the Philippine spa industry from the others offering like-same services.

We have it all

Apart from fusion movements, the country is blessed with the natural resources that can make all these happen and make the years, the younger spa-fascination in Asia.

"Philippine countries built like respective spa industry out of just raw resources, Germany, the Czech Republic and Hungary capitalized on their mineral springs, Austria, its forest itself, Italy, its volcanic mud, and France, its seaweeds. Our neighbors Thailand and Indonesia made use of their culture, plants and herbs. Can you think of a country that has it all? Only the Philippines," she says.

The country has all forms of plants and herbs that can be made into essential oils, including plants along the tropical or lowers grass, oil-seeds and roots or wood oil.

"We also have the waterworks that bring out the natural minerals of the water, the springs and the volcanoes...the sources of all the materials available for various spa treatments," she says.

Spa is the confluence of today—day spa, resort spa, cruise spa, club spa and medical spa...offer different kinds of treatments such as massage, scrubs, bodywraps, thalassotherapy or therapy that involves bathing in heated fresh minerals.

Although the "Filipino Brand of Spa" will be focusing on the "Hilot" or therapeutic massage, the raw materials that the country has in abundance will be the source of other spa resource spa operators may opt to offer.

In line with the objective of giving the "Filipino Brand of Spa" the necessary push, the DOT is holding training programs on traditional massage for spa personnel, so-called spa therapists, who will be specializing as the "Hilot." The training will be undertaken by Salvador "Bo" Rapadas, head of the Philippine Hoteliers' Association. Rapadas is a chemical engineer, tutor, healer and herbalist called *albularyo*. Marjorie, who chairs the PHA educational committee and the Manila spa of the Filipino Brand of Spa, Singapore, says training and educating spa therapists are a priority of the spa industry and the DOT.

Filipino culture

The Philippine spa industry wants to create an edge over the others in the area of human resource since globally, there has been a shortage of qualified spa personnel.

"Similar to our traditional manghilot (healer), our spa therapists doing the 'Hilot' treatment will be able to determine, by just pressing a finger or use of a chart, which parts of the spa-goer's body need more massage and attention," she said.

To add a Filipino touch to these processes, the hotel and restaurant is researching and identifying soothing Filipino music that will be played during the sessions.

We are going to that. We are making the hills of the CEP Unit (and Center of the Philippines) in Cavite, Rizal, Bulacan, Pampanga as for the purpose. We have spa-

With the results to fully develop and promote the the country's own brand, the "Filipino Brand of Spa" and the "Hilot" will be made the major offering in all DOT-accredited spa and member-firms of PHA.

Although the spa culture has been in existence for thousands of years now in many European countries, spa-going started becoming a phenomenon in Asia only in the 1980s, says Marjorie.

Indonesia and Thailand played a major role in this. The rich and diverse cultures, as well as the natural resources of the region, gave a uniquely exotic flavor to the relaxing spa experience and helped stir up a global spa explosion.

Pioneering entrepreneurs

Some pioneering Filipino entrepreneurs, 2nd to Marjorie, went of going into the spa business in the late 1980s. However, the country was not able to cash in on the

A PHILSCA (PHYSICAL) gym, with the latest exercise equipment, is among the facilities usually made available by spa operators or their clients.

AN EMPIRITY pavilion: the spa experience at the Solmar Spa Club in Alabang, owned by Marjorie Lumagui, a leading spa entrepreneur.

MASSAGE is... and will always be, the highlight of a spa treat.

neighboring Thailand and Indonesia, whose spa brands have become popular not only in their own region but also in other parts of the world, when spa became a phenomenon and the trade boomed.

While Indonesia now has 1,212 spas and Singapore's 147, the Philippine association of spa-owners only 61 spa operator-members.

In fact, Philippine spa operators separated themselves only a few or so spa and the DOT has just started accrediting them.

But Marjorie and her peers believe it is never too late for the country to catch up given the huge market potential and the ability of the Filipino spa operators to provide quality service that supersedes the scope of the spa-goers.

The spa trade is a success industry as the country its growth, according to Marjorie, is driven by the modern society and the environment...the pollution stress from work and modern-day living.

The air race in the corporate world, the tough chase of maintaining a household and raising kids. And the traffic jams make people need relief from stress through some relaxing and rejuvenating sessions and treatments of, trend by spas.

A typical spa-goer is a career-wife, a temporary escape from the realities of modern-day living, and it is to see more as symbol for a lifestyle change and a need for self-enhancement.

With the Filipinos resolve to make it, there seems to be no reason why the "Filipino Brand of Spa" and the "Hilot" would not succeed in making a name for the country in the international spa industry.

Connubial blitz

From page B1

as to what a natural model rather than the prepared inclipped.

Gone are the days when a wedding album merely contained the highlights of the ceremony. Today, it starts taking as a pre-nuptial photo session, where couples are photographed in their most romantic moments just before they say happy vows.

Albums also need not be done in duplicate either with their trimmings. Black is now acceptable, from other colors to provide the wedding mood.

Bridal says one indication that the wedding industry has expanded is the increase in the number of exhibitions. The Bridal Expo

in March 2002, there were only 147 exhibitors. This has increased to 189 for the March show, which will end today.

Deals closed during the fairs show were worth some P1.8 million. This went up to P5.4 million as of September last year.

Despite really spend a lot on their weddings because they believe that it is a once in a lifetime thing," Bridal says. "So, they seem the best deals they can afford."

As long as Filipinos think that way, the wedding industry will surely get even bigger.

(Wedding Expo Philippines will run until today at the SMC Exhibition Center. For more info, log on to www.theweddingexpo.com)

PSBank Peso Time Deposit

Deposit Amount (in pesos)	Interest Rates (%) 30 days	60 days	90 days	1 year
100,000 - 499,999	4.625	4.750	4.875	5.000
500,000 - 999,999	5.250	5.375	5.500	5.750
1.0MM - 4,999,999	5.500	5.750	5.875	6.000
5.0MM - 9,999,999	5.750	6.000	6.125	6.250
10 million and up	6.000	6.250	6.500	6.750

Visit any of our 130 PSBank branches nationwide.

ASIA INTERNATIONAL AUCTIONEERS, INC.

AIA Trucks & Equipment

4-DAY PUBLIC AUCTION

MARCH 17, 18, 19 & 20, 2005

(Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday)

Sale Starts at 9:00 A.M.

Inspection Dates: March 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16

(Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday)

Your Best Source of Quality Machines in Asia

Over 2,000 Items to be Sold

LOWER MAU CAMP ARGONAUT SI-WAY, SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE, PHILIPPINES

Tel.: (63-47) 253-1313

Fax: (63-47) 252-4840 / 253-1041

E-mail: asia@subicsl.com

Register on-line at www.asia-intl-auctioneers.com

Auction Style PARADE

Join Our Auction and Experience The AIA Advantage

LINEWITH Explore streetwear in shades only as intended at runway

The terno in fighting form

By Charlie V. Pilapil

IT wasn't too long ago when activities and design competitions were held to foster renewed interest in the Philippine terno. Soon, the distinct butterfly sleeves of the traditional Filipina dress began reappearing in formal occasions and in chichi parties of the social set.

The terno was back in fashion.

At a recent lenten ball at St. Scholastica's College, however, a plan was presented that attempted to bolster and distinguish the terno once more, and more than its role as a dress that

VOLTAIRE 11

THE HEUTE contestant Ivan Angeles dons Hector del Pilar's Cecilia during the Marriott ten-garment stylized parade at dusk.

The terno in fighting form

A recent lecture looks beyond the national dress as a fashion item, and more as an important element in the struggle for women's suffrage

LEYTENEWLA Carnival Queen Paulita de los Reyes in her terno. More on the early suffragists, more beauty queens and more carnivals, if you didn't skipped this story.

played an important part in the women's suffrage movement.

The lecture, "Ang Alta, Ang Barong at Ang Terno? Dress of Cladding and Dress in the Suffrage Movement," was the first in a series being held by the NCCA-CCI National Network of the Assistant Commissioners for Philippines in the course of the centennial celebrations of the Philippine women's suffrage in August.

Dr. Alice Reed, paper, "Gender, Nation and Politics of Dress in 20th Century Philippines" also tackled how the barong Tagalog was linked to political agendas and political advocacy-oriented women as Philippine politics—from the suffragist era to the present.

Opposing identities

In one Reed was careful to say, in Philippine history, the women's dress and the Filipino dress represented opposing identities, "but what we have what they represented is nationality or not in any temporally predictable."

A Ph.D. graduate of the University of Michigan, Reed teaches at the School of History of the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, and her research interests include gender and power in 20th-century history, the history of Filipino feminisms, the politics of dress.

According to Reed, the terno as we know it today evolved from the dress style of the late 19th century, which also included the style worn around the waist as a mark of decency.

The period, which was shaped over the shoulders and doubled as a scarf, was later added by the Spaniards. This was also for purposes of decency as women in those days didn't have bras. The Spaniards further refashioned the dress by introducing a more elaborate skirt style. The dress was known as the Maria Clara.

The butterfly sleeves now seen in the modern terno made its appearance around the time of the American occupation. The sleeves, which used to be larger, became bigger and more infolded.

The one piece and pronounced terno is what we know now as the modern version. Originally the top and skirt were not joined. The tube-shaped terno was made to fit, and was worn by the elite class.

"The campaign for Filipino independence during the American colonial period raised different issues for men and women," Reed said. The early suffragists who fought in the revolution assumed they would be considered part of nation-building. But Filipino "were refused to share the place with women. (They) didn't want to include the women in the new nation."

Interestingly the American colonizers supported suffragists. It became a predicament for the suffragists to lobby for a nationalist government because that same government would disenfranchise them as women.

At the time, Filipino men were western male, while didn't mean they weren't nationalists, Reed said. They represented political power and modernity. The women in their terno, meanwhile, repre-

THE "MAN of the House." President Ramon Magsaysay wears the barong Tagalog on his inauguration to signal the Filipino mass.

PAZ LA. Sahara, one of the early suffragists, in her terno.

The terno in fighting form

From page C1

sound the decolonized, educated subject.

Grand strategy

As Rizon explained it, wearing the national dress was a strategy by the women to repackage the modern Filipina "by playing on much revalorized the commissioned Filipina costume."

But the utopian deliberately avoided picking the Malit Dalit dress because they reported what it represented—the harsh, submissive woman. "The suffragists said the Malit Dalit was before."

The suffragists who used western dress for work and school were because the terno was deemed inappropriate for the local weather and active daily life. They however, deliberately wore the national dress on official occasions, causing them to realize "pinoyness and class."

These women were conservative educated, English-speaking, Americanized professionals, and they eventually succeeded not just in their demand for the right to vote, but also in changing the Spanish civil code that classified women alongside dead, minors and insanes.

The changes also allowed them to hold property and inheritances, exercise business rights without checking with their husbands, and enjoy conjugality issues.

The Filipina then became identified with the nationalist sentiment from post-independence until martial law. But it wasn't until 1965 that the barong was considered formal wear when, in an unprecedented move, President Ferdinand Magsaysay wore it to his inauguration. (President Sukarno of Quezon wore the Amerikana to their respective inauguration.)

It was Magsaysay's way of extolling the masa or the dirt-poor peasants clothing, Rizon said. And as a parallel move, First Lady Lal Magsaysay wore a Ramon Valera terno.

By this time, the look of the terno was also changing. The dilemma was whether to wear the panuelo or not. Some claimed it was in the Valera era—and to have introduced the panuelo—but Rizon because it looked more feminine and more skin on the evening gown. It caused to-ing-and, and Rizon said there was even a demand for a Senate resolution that would bring back the panuelo.

Different meanings

"The women dress and nationalism took on different meanings at different times in Philippine history," said Rizon. "During martial law the Maria Clara became known as nationalist—wearing the national dress." Moreover the national dress's dress by was legitimate not only in the eyes of the Filipino but also in the eyes of the world. "Fifteen years later, people who demanded his resignation wanted the Filipina dress be worn, and expressed their opposition by wearing western dress."

It is acknowledged, however, that while Magsaysay elevated the barong Tagalog to formal wear, it was Marcos who sought to popularize the barong to Filipinos alike. It was he who first wanted the everyday occasions.

A less formal, short-sleeved version of the barong was even introduced.

Marcos also sought to establish that the Filipino is as stylish as his western counterpart. In 1973, the barong underwent a name change to Filipinas by the house of Pierre Cardin. The Cardin barong had open cuffs, and darts were added to make it more tapered (the traditional barong are boxy-fitting). That was the most radical innovation the barong and the 1980s.

Meanwhile, the modern terno became synonymous to First Lady Imelda Marcos.

Rizon said Imelda Marcos wore the terno to her best in New York, in spite of the western to represent the Filipino nation through the dress—the Filipino as a victim of the powerful West.

The former first lady was quoted as saying that since she could not wear the flag, she wore the terno. However, this representation of the dress was not endorsed by the local audience, said Rizon.

Likewise, when President Macapagal-Arroyo took her oath after President Joseph Estrada's ouster, Rizon observed that the former wore a western suit to distinguish herself from her predecessor, who always wore a barong. The move was a way of presenting herself as an efficient, professional woman, in "contrast to the unsophisticated, unsophisticated of her predecessor."

"The national dress was worn to further political agendas," said Rizon. In the Philippines, it has been used by politicians and leaders to transform themselves into nationalist icons, thereby securing the dress its own place in history and scholarship.

E-mail the author at amonsal@inquirer.com.ph

DR. Mina Rizon

PRESIDENT Corazon Aquino, shown here in a kimono-style barong, became synonymous with the Maria Clara gown, to differentiate herself from Ortenza wearing Imelda Marcos

UNIQUE in the past, it has become customary for visiting foreign dignitaries to wear the national dress of the host country. Showing identical barongs, US President Bill Clinton and President Fidel Ramos are shown here at the 1996 Apec summit in Subic.

THE HANDSHAKE in Philippine commerce

The Manobo ascension to heaven

By Glenn Mas
and Gilda Cordero-Fernando

(conclusion)

VIII. THE "SALIMBAL"

The next ordeal Agyo's followers only watched and prayed. While some duty climbed the coconut palm to get the *salimbal*, the heavenly vessel, would fetch them for the trip to heaven. Agyo encouraged Lemnisan to join her in her trade for the people to see the whole waiting for the *salimbal*. Lemnisan meekly got a twig, planted it on the ground and prayed to the Great Diwata. But it was indeed his will that they would somehow would be furnished more so that more effort would produce as many as it were time. After a brief silence and the pantomime of the dance, hundreds of heathen appeared all around.

Agyo instructed the children to sit on the fruit tree, the young girls on the second, the young men on the third, followed by the older women, and on the last one the older men. Kimgan reminded them that she would not be coming with them. It was the will of the Highest Diwata that she was behind to guide the future generations of thousands. She also would be the link between the child diwata, who had the left, and the Supreme Diwata.

Agyo and his brothers Pandalos, Lemnisan and Bindak, sisters Tebugko and Dumbangan, then went up the rainbow ladder. They did this by following the steps of the diwatas. When they reached the first level, they saw trees and flowers, as many as they got to bloom. In the land of the fairies. Kimgan was the one who called the *salimbal* floating above the trees. "Agyo!" he shouted, "Wait for me! Don't fall down out the next air heaven!"

"My faithful Limgadan," Agyo shouted back, "Save your side. He sees you with tears when we left. He loved her so much. Kimgan rewards to protect the children from getting at her.

Limgadan ran to her at he could. Kimgan's soul saved all life. He also saved the fairies where his wife Limgadan to lay helplessly, the others trying to reach through the parents to close her. Only one layer of kimgan was left standing. Limgadan's already opened dead all the witches he could reach.

With the knotted limgadan made a small cloth hammock and placed the baby in it without cutting short its umbilical cord. "My child," he said "You are not destined to go with us. I cannot you will go to the underworld and become the land of the Bukidnon, the guardian spirits of growing plants.

Limgadan then took his side, who was thinking profusely up on his shoulder. After taking baby from the Highest Diwata he stood on his shield and was magically lifted up to the land of the fairies. The good Diwata he noticed that he had a golden hexagram. The blood of his wife that had dripped on his chest had turned to gold.

There were seven compals or platforms on which the *salimbal* would rest on its way up. On each platform was built a house and a pavilion for one of the family diwatas. The people only took very little. When the *salimbal* had loaded with seven Pakak, a follower who was very fat, could not be accommodated. He was provided with a ladder. He got the seventh platform

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday LIFESTYLE

SOCORRO C. RAMOS

National treasure

THE GENERATIONS of Filipinos who have known only one bookstore all their lives—and that's the National Book Store—will be the least bit surprised to hear that 82-year-old Socorro Ramos has been the grandparent figure in young Entrepreneur of the Year circles.

PLAYTIME
By the Staff

Storewide Sale!
March 7 - 31, 2005
up to 20% off
Plus... Additional 5% Discount if you buy a Complete Showcase
"All items off the floor"

National treasure

From page 12

With her husband, she opened the first National in Ermita. It was nothing but a stall, but from such humble origins, Mita has grown enormously and is fast living up to its name with 70 branches nationwide.

Undaunted by a lack of college education and a firm believe that if you work hard enough you can get anything you want, Nenita Cuving hosted once other client who is the license to distribute Hallmark greetings cards 35 years ago, and acquired permits from publishing giants McGraw Hill, Prentice Hall and Addison Wesley to reprint academic books on cheaper newsprint.

But her biggest coup is in keeping her family actively involved in the business. From her two sons Alfred and Benjamin and her daughter Cecile to her grandchildren (she has 5, and 7 great grandkids).

She thinks it's a long shot for a Filipino to be picked as World Entrepreneur of the Year in Monte Carlo (we were connected on your children's Year Tan Lakhing bagged it last year). But if she talks to the Ernst & Young consultant who talked to Go Tabwilo's staff during the Playlists, she is sure to win their hearts. Tenel us and get to know the event, Nenita, down-to-earth but super savvy businesswoman.

This is the second year we'll be Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award and you were it. Did you think you would win?

Alfred Chuck: I would be unsure when he announced my name. Any graduating my mga kalaban. Sa kabilang mga mga kasi ko mga CEO, CFO, COO (laughter). ... pero pa-rami! Talagang mag-aral ako. Mga mga anak ni mga PhD. ang pagdating nito mga Engglish. (Laughter)

Hindi naman ba sa Engglish nakasalalay yan. Its when your name was announced how did it feel?

Ako di mang in-announce pa nga kasi ko na nanang kasi mga mga kalaban ko—mga mga ECV kabot.—mangan na silang kumain at ako pa-dating na nang sinabi, sino-sino nang Amerikano sabin. Sabi ko, "Saan na kaya?" Parang ka-asahang yung manok dahapit ka sa kapot kasi nakakainan lang kapag ng pwyang dinner." (Laughter) Ako, nawang-tawa naman ako. Nang ma-announce ako, nagulat ako. "Ako ang pangalan niya?" Hindi ako, hindi ka akalain. I wondered if they made a mistake. (Laughter)

What do you think is the reason you won?

That's a good question. I was thinking, the whole night figure nang mga pinoys lang nagsabing ng mga salitaga kalibrado nang na-announce lang ang pagal. It brought the prize down to 70 percent. Nakalang lang nasi! Nobody mentioned Tabagong mag-aral ako. Mga mga anak ni mga PhD. ang pagdating nito mga Engglish. (Laughter)

How much capital did you first put in to your business?

Well, this cost P11. At Mr. Siniso nasa P500. Mas mayaman si Dr. Tanco at dito ch. (Laughter) So P11. Sakopanlibi nan ch. Isaka ka! Hati nga nanhindi. Pero noon P5 to 11 lang.

What did you sell at first?

Kasi nang Japanese time, books were censored, anything about democracy about the U.S. Pagbalik nang nakapasa sa gates ang operation' sa American. History lessons are long lumipat Pinoy—ginagit nang ginagit. So nahuwa ng napakaraming mga libro. Isinapa ng mga mga notebooks, ballpens, yung mga klasyal magkakaroon ng writing papers.

Nagtinda ba kayo ng papel de bapor? (Laughter) Kaya pa ba ng negosyo nan?

Ang pa-lamang yung mga libapon, papel de bapon na nasa loob!

Ano sa tingin nyo kakit nagpapal kayo ng gastos at nyong ibang kumikita ng negosyo?

Napos they have found other more lucrative businesses. Hindi ko nanabi. Kasi ako, I'm happy with my business. Kung ano ang kaya ko, kaya ko. Hindi ako nagpapalawak. Kung ano ang kaya ko, kaya ko. Kung ano ang kaya ko, kaya ko. Kung ano ang kaya ko, kaya ko.

GO GIRNO Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Woman Entrepreneur and finalist trophies designed by Iraqi Pinpil

WITH EMPLOY Nenita, Mayor Eusebio Manuel Cuving have to sing and her favorite song is "Fascination."

Nakapaysuwan ako ng magsarong. (Laughter)

Nenita, still be interested in know how you trained your grandchildren last month pagdating sa mga apo na-sinira na yung negosyo.

Grandmother ako sa tinalaan ng, pati si ephrim. Halong nanalan ako, eyespan, lagnan mo. Sabi ko, "Kailangan magmiba ko kayo. Hindi naman ako bahin bahong panahon. Marunong kayo, you only have to continue it, wouldn't have to struggle anymore." At ang importante sa pinasid na pinu-naksi yan: nanakilalan mo ang bayan.

How many you able to continue your sons and your daughter in go into the business?

Ahain na siguro it's influence of the ten-year-old thinkers ako—the turkey nanam para libro, para notebooks, para school supplies. At saka sabi kaining ibang pang-cooperation kasi libro, school supplies. Ang isang bihasi sabing sila, ang mga kabata magmula sa baby, ang kalaunan lang nandoon, kasi nang pang-one pa lang, na sasi ko schools kasi ko bodega. Kaysapat if pasiv nan these things, you will be enhanced by the environment.

But you can also rebel against it...

Pareho rin... Dyna kung sinasabing, "Pag-ayaw mo ko kayo pabayaan ng ang mga-sasama ito ko sa inyo. Kailangan pag-aralan ninyo kasi, magkakaiba sila, mga ba-iba-iba ng ugali.

Lahat ng klasong tsokolate pinagsa-pasan ninyo nakarating?

Cream-O, Mr. Sapon, kung nanamit nan dahon kasi ng Chinese candi sa amapa, pati yung mga chocolates silang mga papasok sa loobin. Sa, bahin mula kito, magkapay kasi ng mandapon-dito." Sapon, pakukuan ko silang nemubhid ng-sweet sa-ko. Isapat na yung mga bata. Ang isang tabon kan 100 yung kasan na Christmas candi, apat na sachets na ng 25. Sent me nang ko delivery na yun sa Dasmarinas.

Why did you start selling Christmas candy and ice cream?

Kasi ang libro, umuusad. You can only advertise this long school opening at saka kasi at second semester ka bataasan na kasi to think of other things to sell.

How do you find when people say "Ernst Bank Store is like a convenience store?

Hindi naman namamin ang loob ko. Tama naman eh. (Laughs) Wala akong mapagsasa, this is the only solution to survive. Anyway, mas libro pa rin. When it comes to investment we have choice. "Puwede libro ako" kasi pwedeng. Pero kung 150,000 copies of it. Ginamit na pang-pull yung Pedro P.175 yung ang ganda-ganda na. Imagine, 400,000 copies, nandito pa yung "Diary Funny Day."

When you started did you personally choose what titles to order?

Ginawa ko ito noon pa-lamang kasi ang mga mga students sa America, dahil may Filipino-friends.

How did you get the Hallmark license? That's a big one!

Oh, yes. Nagpunta sito-nagkakausap ng local licensee in 1973. Hako manang sher Hermes Santo. 3 pm. Tatlo lamat na sa-umuwak. Pagdating doo sabi ni-ko, "You come to my house to-morrow, ok?" Sabi, "Tomorrow, I don't know how to make a proper-ready. But give it to me and I'll show you what I can do." Sabi-ko-bigla-ko-pa-yung ganyan. (Laughter) Nagkausad ng ako yung mamahalan. Tapos kumuha siya ng mga pictures, nagkausap-kos yung mga mamang. Pagdatong-nya, nagsi ko-naman. Tapang ako, sigot. How many designs, what sizes... Ang daming tanong na kasi to produce a greeting card, diam na akon ko yun eh. Gumagawa ako non eh. Meron akong Philippine license at nagsi-sell ako ng mga yung valar. Tapos nalos-sa kamp ko yung papel na-mahirap siya. "There a your project study." (Laughter) Sabi ko diam. "I will let you know in a few weeks." After a few weeks dumating nag sabi, "If you are really interested you have to come to Kansas City to sign the agreement." Haha, ang kaso ko!

Did you go to Kansas?

Nagpunta ako nanda to naturalized ako sa-employee. Bawa pa lang ako-nakasabi na ng-yung Hallmark dyan, pinabalik kasi. Ako, yung limabang-buk nang salaris na yung pinapasa nanlos. Yung mga licensees ako-sa Asian countries, pumalakda sa-nan pa-ring-observe.

In the print Go Hallmark cards have little notes?

Yes, the design and the wordings come from them. They send us a sam-ple-ready film to printing. Then we give it to the printers. But ang distributorial ng-cards.

Between Hallmark and your own designs, which cards better?

Well, we have been selling ours-confident than Hallmark. In ours-many-two years ago, especially nang-valentine's boom. Ako, "Ano ba ito? Parang Pasko lang." Hindi pa-libro. Para nang-nakakainan ang mga tao ng valentines-nang mahalaga-ng-kards sila.

How about romance?

Ay naku, ito ang No. 2 bestseller (laughter). Kasi mga romance-nan Agatha Christie-yan, mga kanan nanan nyan. Para ang pa-ra-PHP1,000 lang.

Besides your bookstore, what are your other interests?

Siguro collecting paintings kasi noong ano-ako-nagsi-start. Sa sala-sinigang.

Hamonong kayong magluto?

Hindi... (laughter)

Hamonong kayong magbakasi?

Hindi rin... (laughter)

Hindi ka yung magbakasi?

Hindi ako yung... (Laughter) Para kung magbibinda, gaching-gaito ko. Sabi ko kung magsasabi ko ang ayan hindi. (laughter) Ako, nung sikat magbinda pa ako-nandito pina-pinte eko. "O, magkano-ano-ito-ano-ito?" Ulaw kung ko. "Kukin ko na yung-ano, eh, cash ko." Ako, nanong-ano-nanan-ito? (laughs)

Ang nanan nanan, pahapa-na, may magkakausap ng wedding Hindi-na cards. Di-dapat-kinsey kapag hindi. Ang pagsasa ko. "Mga, meron kaming mga ka-yan para sa mga-kapag-kasal." "Maglalakbay yung Ashara, yung "Sasama?" "Iyon-a nga, hahka-ca." Ayan, nakakabah. (Laughter) Sinasaya ko-nangi ang-paper, sabi ko, "Ano ba ito?" Ang-pa-ra-ring-ang-paper, sabi ko, "Ano ba ito?" Ang-pa-ra-ring-ang-paper, sabi ko, "Ano ba ito?"

WITH HER CHILDREN, sons Alfred and Benjamin and daughter Cecile, all of whom also sign, are executives-members.

APPLIPHILIMIL ...ako-an ka-ka-lamdag ano-yun. Nenita Cuving paves another lucrative and carefree day-family home that-doubled-as-a-war-shanty.

SLIPPER ...sabi-ng-ni "Siguro-ay-giving-back-an-kwarta-na-kun-sa-kin-dapat" **kasi-ko-na Hallmark's-Andrea.**

National treasure

From page 6A

medicines before your parents.

"Happy Hubby" was a bestseller all over the world. He'll sell as well here?

Sa, we sold 12,000 copies of Harry Dento Sa 5 Dat rest.

But you told some of "The Purpose-Driven Life"?

Sa, 200,000 copies, but it was cheaper nemon. P175 versus P1,000 plus for "Marites Vera."

Personalized ba ang management style mo, Nanay? Do you base rules to the event for your personnel?

Oh, yes, yes. You have to have a smiling face. Be polite to the customer. And consider the customer king.

How many employees do you have?

Siguron, 9,000.

Mere dimmo makinawa?

Ay synempre, nako, problema mo yon noong mokilo. (Laughter) Halos apatnapu 25 percent sa kanila have been with us for 20 years.

Ano nagpembuan mo kay Mr Ramos, Nanay?

Good question... Bata pa ako, hindi ko alam kung ano ang dalag ginagawa. (Laughter) Ako ang age pay sanda 14 years! But it was God's will. Alam mo ang nagsave isa mga import ran noon ng mga kano sa mundo ito Gimmie. Gnagawang mga bikini. Dinadala nan sa Mercosupo sa superpowers.

Why didn't he convince you to join him in his jewelry business instead of going into fashion business?

Di nga, bata nan nagsimula yan, noo! (Laughter) Ako hindi kasi noonday yan eh. Ilang may yero lang sako sa hilili ng powder. Di mong kaya, papel, everyday metal yan. Ang dalidi nagsyon yang copy paper. Everyday ear can sell thousands of reams.

When you first started, did you have to borrow money?

In the beginning hindi. Pero nung huli na, nung kalaki-laki na. Sa synempre, you have to open letters of credit. Pero noong simula hindi. Whole to nung hindi cannot young loan sa kanto dolo dala-nanan sa Carnation but nag cash.

What is the most expensive item that you're selling?

Most expensive? May mahuda kasing cellphones, meron nga Peeker pero, gold, P30,000 each, mahuda.

Besides store location, what is important to a business like Nenita?

Ambiance, lighting, shelves. Yung display no, dapat maganda, attractive.

Has the National color always been red?

Eh kasi lucky ren ang red. But when we started we had red stripes sa white, the pattern nan eh... After ten siang if for 40 plus years, siang nga bata, nga apo, gusto silang bagalan. Red background lapo white nanang. Alam mo amalyo eko. Dinyang mas makinakita sa pag an nang bilbil sa suguf na may stripes, hoppy na ko eh. Big sabihin nya bagra mano sa kana. Eto no sgad. Eh yung red ang dinadag pa magamit. Ayo naghoholan kasi, eh wrong one. Lahat eko ta favor sa red. I have to respect their opinion. Kailangan synempre mo because their will serve best how to make decision.

Meron ba ka kayong arrangement with the malls for National? Sa normal you're in all the malls.

Alam mo kung bakit? Kasi parang hindi kinapkin ang mall kung walang National, ang tawo nga-nga nalang ano para manalik ng quary. Jollibee, McDonald's, National... Iyon parang a well-known eh.

You have your own school supplies brand di ba, Nanay?

Yung Best Buy Magnetik, good quality pero mura. The secret of it all is nakuha yung presyo.

How can you able to do that?

By volume purchase. Gaya ng notebooks, kung isang store ko lang gumo-on long ang mahihili mo. Eh kung meron kang branches like ako ang hihilihin mo sa supplier to you get a good price.

What are you doing to encourage the young children to read more?

Well, our thing, to encourage them or make books available at low prices. Typical ng ating libro. Only 25 dollar. If you multiply at current exchange rate we are 25 percent lower. Number two, meron ayong mga Liberty National, mga ganyang promos. Meron tayong mga raffles.

How close Liberty National with?

WITH MASTER: Nick Joaquin se he autographs a copy of "Super Salesgirl" pic-ure, a small book on Henry Coeing which he was commissioned by Ben Ramos to write for his birthday.

You present you card every time you hav something ir National and you get bonus points. Ik-mochild to Cards you. Mamming pinoy-Daughter. You have to do that kasi kailangang magkaroon ng interest ang mgtomo.

What time do you start your day?

Seven. Lost breakfast then I make telephone calls. Bukadero na kung may tatawagan ko the night before kasi hindi madidistorbo ko. Tapos kabo na 9 gyo-to the office. I'm there until 6:30 p.m. I gyo-sleep or h-on. (Laughter)

What do you do until 6 a.m.?

Well, nagbabasa ng buenas. (Laughter)

Galing mo, Nanay!

Oo, totoo! Inumpisa ang kandidato! Yan sumusunod mga mga pinapinda-di.

Do you watch TV?

Ah, yes. Yung news at 11:30 ng gabi.

Sa wala nang business ay gabi?

Hang minute kasapi ko yung mga akala ko by phone, kung may sangguni, kung may isang sinu...gyapos.

Do you watch movies?

Ay hindi na. Kung bibigyan nko, pabili meron nko sa bahay kasi.

Kung buhay si Mr. Ramos, ano ke gimagawa nyong dalawa?

Binawawal kasi ng sino, mga double pangawa. (Laughter)

Pero ways ninu favorite niyan?

Meron po yan, tatay Tyrone Power, Harley Temple. Iyon di ng-ova kinda ako!

At kung ako ba ang gano'n ay-o a-dentist?

Uwaaa.

Do your children and grandchildren get books from National for free?

Hindi nagbabayad sila. Hindi na sinagbabayad. Kung kailangan ko ng book-lapit-lahat sila sa National. Babayaran ko. Bakit sabihin ako mo mam bang yon i pay ilo mam ng-makit mamm ang libro.

Pero meron mamon kayong Lolong National? (Laughter)

Actually, I think it is side kabit na nga nak-o nga ayo bokasyon ang kinakuha sa enrolment ilan ang kinakuha sa engineering? Kaya lang nakikinig kasi na langkasa ko ng ayaha ng kabuhayan eh.

What are your plans for National?

Ang plano ng mga bata to make it 300 stores.

Then you'll be in all the provinces...

Siguro dahil gusong serbisi din sa consumers. I tell you, we opened the branch in Tagaytay. Bawas ang mga gawain. (Good!) sabi.

Is that your farthest in Luzon?

Ito, I went there for the opening. It took me eight hours. Tawang umuwag meron kaming naya.

Sa Sembi pa, ano ang plan doon sa future?

Siguroon. Ok. Gusto meron din. Sembi sana pa. Pero I think magkakaroon din doon.

Do you go to book fairs abroad?

Sa, once in a while. Dati ngayon ang pinakabalo ko ang mga tayo.

Where are the last time you went to a book fair?

About five years ago! Pero years ago, bong son ko do Book Fair sa Jakarta.

You're going to Okinawa for the World Interpreneur of the Year. di ba? Is there Mormon ang sango sa Nano' kin.

Correct. Gnkwango ang plano.

Do you take vacations?

Hilo Week. At least, responsable ka kasi pagsalo. Tapos yung ajanador mo, Mamon mo. (Laughter)

Do you work on your birthday?

Oo. Ano samang dapwewaya. Isang birthday no-kinde di ka magpawalang?

Pero, you don't take 1 mid-lone, you don't have birthday leaves... Malaki ng sin-ang bawas nyan!

Hindinga eh... Libalas lang!

Magkano nanalilo mo, Nanay?

Kulang nga ang binibigay sa akin eh. (Laughter) Yeloo! Kulang lang nawalo sa akin. Hindi nako mamon. (Laughter)

"MODERN royals" creations of Dennis Lustico

NEW Beach billboard model Carolyn Martelo, designer Raja Lumod and Raoul Dee

"VINTAGE glamour" creations of Randy Ortiz

Shocking news: I'm on the hip mom list!

I feel like I have run the gamut of possible lists—and all this in the midst of my pregnancy

FROM MY stinking it on last year's Most Stylish List of Mega Magazine to my recent nomination to the Most Hip Mom List of Smart Parenting Magazine, I feel like I have run the gamut of possible lists—and all this in the midst of my pregnancy. Summer Medina, who's just celebrated 10 years in the publishing business, ran an carousel poll among its growing staff, and it is a nice of them to think that I am a "hip mom."

The decision will be out in time for Mothers' Day (the May, but since I will be declining my day by then, I asked if I could have my parental early. Besides I weigh less today than I will in two months' time, and no mother wants to look like a mother on Mother's Day. So, of, we want to look like wives! Or in some cases, we even want to look like our husbands.

Photos: Philyo Ilalim

The only problem with making my "list," is one can already anticipate the unfavorable opinions from readers who disagree. Anyone who makes my list should remain unfazed by my superiority from the low-minching crowd. In my time, I welcome unpleasant statements since I just choose to please myself and I am entitled to their own opinions, which I respect.

Here's one reader's opinion, for example, "The piece always features Tessa Prieto-Valdez because she keeps turning outfits according to the current trend—still looks mga, but not quite." And you are absolutely right. But I don't think this makes her one of the country's least dressed women! How did she end up on your list? Solve!"

Mega Magazine's editor in chief Lisa Sandoz responded with her perceptive letter explaining that she's for to a blast for Stylish list and not a Best Dressed List, the sense that being stylish does not mean running the latest bags or designer gowns or dressing appropriately; rather style is the expression of one's personality and individuality through what we choose to wear. Think God there are such articulate editors around to rush to our defense at moments.

New editor

After 12 years with the Mega family, Lisa recently announced a shocker she is retiring! What makes our letter to the midst of her

EVENT boss Angel Jacob, JR Nuno and Pristine Jose

DESIGNING mom Lolo Tan-Gan and daughter Tess

SAB friends Josephine Reyes and Peter Gamboa

Florence Chiok

ELLE Shop's Jessa Esperanza and Astrid Crisologo

NLEX lovely coupons Lala Remy Lumod and Jessa Lumod

NEW Mega editor Carla Gloi

ELEGANT mom Gloria Reyes and daughter Ana

ACHIEVEMENT Wendi Jose Serrano and Joey Carreño

FANTASTIC list Manny Carreon and Jackie Aquino

Whitening craze

This night we were introduced to the new Pond's product that will surely sell well, since majority of Filipinas have a desire for whiter skin. In contrast, Caucasian ladies want to tan to attain the European color that is, the perfect tan. There are a multitude of skin-whitening lotion and soaps but this seems the most appealing because of its ingredients like vitamins B3 and C, pearl extracts and clear-like emollients. I am so literally enjoying Sol Rosa's cold cream but since it is my mother's and her mother's beauty regimen, is the product most surely work.

A special ballcon show highlighted Pond's Collections by three outstanding designers, each representing a particular fashion woman to go through to life. Raja Lumod for cool street, puff without frills for pseudo-mom who skirts about so voluminous, I could hide my tummy in them), Bernie Lustico look care of the urban person inspired from mod, sexy models of the 1960s. And Randy Ortiz celebrated the perfect Diet date with vintage glamour gowns. The models and gowns all looked so gorgeous, I soon thirsted of the perfect round face with mesmerizing dancer arms and legs. I might have a future client in mine. Pond's is under one Dawn Ilum requiring a 22-inch waist line other my fourth baby.

World of caring

Two years ago, I met a most inspiring young lady in the person of no other than the love of so many: Jose Jacquelin Filipinas, the e-mail address of the woman who's done so much for the less fortunate in our country. Inspired and not to be outdone by religious order is very outpacing. Dylan Hill, who is no doubt one of the leaders like those Mormon pretending footprints wearing white short-sleeved shirts and ties, was a successful companion in my self-appointed role of one person's mission life to help turned holidays, exhibitions and housing program uplifting the lives of the underprivileged.

After our initial introduction and feeling his kindness throughout lunch, I was invited to help with one of the events and even this, I accepted the project as one of my previous columns. I was invited to this event, with Isidro Lacson launched at the NBC Tent with top corporations and our government supporting GK's goal of building 40,000 homes in the vulnerable—stricken areas of Luzon. My immediate donation may be nothing compared to the funds raised by the corporate giants supporting GK, but every bit counts.

When a donation has been done to you, you should look at it from a positive perspective and not as the bill who is valuable hours learned. I recently felt this way when I felt that I was taken advantage of by some people I knew. But I also feel that as long as I continue to do as best as I can and just keep a sense of goodness within me, God in itself is heart-warming and fulfilling enough.

E-mail tessa@manila.com.ph

San Beda honors successful alumni

THE SAN BEDA College Alumni Association (SBCAA) marked its 81st Founding anniversary with the traditional Red and White Ball held recently at the SBC Trial Bonifacio Global City.

With the theme "A Celebration of Red Bedanian Achievement," the ball honored Bedans who made a difference through lives of service in the spirit of the Red's motto: Pietas, study, work and pursuit of justice.

Leading the honorees was business tycoon Isidoro Cortesano who, together with the late Bernardo Roa Jr., the late Don Antonio Prieto Chua and the late Jesus Cabarrus, became the first to be elevated to the Hall of Fame in Perdesian.

Awards and citations were also handed out to Globe executive Rudy Ardalozo, Philippine Stock Exchange president Exequiel Javier, Bedans Rodolfo Garcia Gio Lyn Barbers, Hospitalio owner-manager Ricky Calvo, Lui Negotiated businessman Bong Lee Chan, electric cooperative director Max Morales, solicitor-lawyer Gonzalo Duque, Mayor Jaime Mendoza, businessman Jaime Ng on store Andy Centeno, businessman Benj Montevirde and acupuncturist Dr. Ed Concepcion.

Elevated to the San Beda Sports Hall of Fame were Gene Jota, Eduardo Pacheco, Ramon Fernandez, Antonio Cardona, Manuel Trevesthen, Angel de la Paz and Jose Martin. Bar. Jose Carlos V. Lacson received the Simeon V. Mirin Award for outstanding public service.

Anticipated replica Rudy Caya, a Bedan, designed a gold-filled obelisk trophy for the awardees.

San Beda alumni in the fields of business and industry, sports, government service and the entertainment industry attended the event, including Manny V. Pangilinan, head of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company.

The highlight of the annual ball was the reunion of dozen Perdesians and called Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry chair Mike Varela and entry Cecile, Triple W's Rodolfo Villarama and Mrs. Rosario Ilhan Lacson, Toyota Shaw president Arthur Mercurio and wife Marissa, Yvette Pee, Irene Gotiong, businessman Benj Montevirde and acupuncturist Dr. Ed Concepcion.

PHILIPPINE Tourism Authority GM Jose Barlaan Jr. & Miss Dia Ingrid Reyes

Other guests were lawyer Jim Jr. Bonifacio, Actor Miguel Cabarrus, Chito Lorenzo with wife Toni Fabe, architect Gerry Gonzalez, Rep. Joseph Sanchez, Rep. Ben Ignacio, telecom tech-biology specialist Jim Logarta, Bro. Bonifacio veteran Dominador Subaco, Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan and the star "Tito" Concepcion, ABC-5 personalities.

Dog walk to dramatize animal rights

THE PHILIPPINE Canine Club Inc. (PCCI) will hold on March 20 the Dog Walk for A Canine Law for St. Bernard project, which seeks to reform the standing record in the Guinness Book of World Records and fill in up to animal rights advocacy in the country.

PCCI president Rene Ian Rivera said assembly point is the Luneta Grandstand. Dog lovers are expected to fill the stretch of Roxas Boulevard up to the Philippine International Convention Center.

Participants are the Bureau of Animal Industry, Philippine Animal Welfare Society, Animal Kingdom Foundation, Boy Scouts of the Philippines, Girl Scouts of the Philippines, Diamond Pitbull Terrier Club Inc., Philippine Pitbull Club, American Pitbull Club and United Pitbull Club.

The PCCI is holding the activity to accept the social recruitment of animals, especially dogs. It also aims to stop the practice of dog eating.

The world record on dog walk is 15,000, set in England on June 30, 2004.

The PCCI boasts of more than 150,000 members and affiliated clubs nationwide.

"Anyone with dogs, purebred or mongrel, are welcome to join the dog walk event," said Ian Rivera.

Similar activities will also be held in Bacolod, Baguio, Batangas, Bohol, Bukidnon, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, General Santos, Iloilo, La Union, Legazpi, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Tacloban and other areas.

Reunion set

CALLING all Alfred Thread Company employees of Brgy. Mayhaligue, Silang, Cavite, for 2004-05-1990. Please call for a grand reunion on April 30, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., at Orchid Garden Clubhouse, Antipolo Avenue, Brgy. Bonanza, Pasig City. Bring your food. Call Beauty Mendoza at 6555829; Bebe Rendon, 6437205; Mel Ramos, 6405863.